

Arch-Bishop

TILLOTSON'S

Ninth Volume.



The most Reverend
DR. JOHN TILLOTSON
late Arch Bishop of Canterbury.

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Several
DISCOURSES
 OF
 Death and Judgment, and a
 Future State.

Viz.

Of the Immortality of the Soul, as discover'd by Nature, and by Revelation.	The Uncertainty of the Day of Judgment consider'd and improv'd.
Of the Certainty of a future Judgment.	The Certainty, and the Blessedness of the Resurrection of true Christians.
Of the Person by whom the World shall be judged.	Of the Happiness of Good Men, in the future State.
Of the Persons who are to be judged.	The Wisdom of Religion justified in the different ends of good and bad Men.
Of the Actions for which men will be accountable.	The Usefulness of considering our latter End.
Of the Sentence to be pass'd at the day of Judgment.	

By the most Reverend
Dr. JOHN TILLOTSON,
 Late Lord Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury*.

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Lord Bunsen:

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S E R M O N I.

Of the Immortality of the Soul, as
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2 TIM. I. 10.

*But is now made manifest by the appearing
of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath
abolished Death, and hath brought
Life and Immortality to light, through
the Gospel.*

THE Design of the Apostle in
these two Epistles to *Timothy*,
is to direct him how he ought
to demean himself, in the Office w^hich
he bore in the Church; which he does
in the first Epistle: and to encourage
him in his work; which he does here
in the second: in which, after his
B usual

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usual Salutation, he endeavours to arm him against the fear of those Persecutions, and the shame of those Reproaches, which would probably attend him in the work of the Gospel, *ver. 8. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the Testimony of our Lord, nor of me his Prisoner; but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel, according to the Power of God, who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling; as if he had said, The God whom thou serveest in this employment, and by whose Power thou art strengthened, is he that hath saved and called us with an holy calling, that is, it is he who by Jesus Christ hath brought Salvation to us, and called us to this holy Profession; not according to our works, that is, not that we by any thing that we have done, have deserved this at his Hand, but according to his own purpose and grace, that is, according to his own gracious Purpose, which was given us in Christ before the World began, that is, which from all eternity he decreed and determined to accomplish by Jesus Christ.*

But is now made manifest by the appearing

by the appearance of Christ.

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Serm. I.

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pearance of our Saviour Jesus Christ; that is, which gracious Purpose of his is now clearly discovered by our Saviour Jesus Christ's coming into the World, who hath abolish'd Death, and hath brought Life and Immortality to light, through the Gospel.

Which words express to us two happy Effects of Christ's appearance; First, The abolishing of Death; and, Secondly, The bringing of Life and Immortality to light. In the handling of these words, I shall,

First, Open to you the meaning of the several expressions in the Text.

Secondly, Shew what our Saviour Jesus Christ did towards the abolishing of Death, and bringing to light Life and Immortality.

For the First, I shall shew;

I. What is here meant by the appearing of Jesus Christ.

II. What by the abolishing of Death.

B 2

III. What

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III. What by *bringing to light Life and Immortality.*

I. What is here meant by *the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ.* The Scripture useth several Phrases to express this thing to us. As it was the gracious Design of God the Father, so it is call'd *the giving of his Son, or sending him into the World.* John 3. 16. *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son.* Gal. 4. 4. *In the fulness of time God sent his Son.* As it was the voluntary Undertaking of God the Son, so it is call'd *his coming into the World.* In relation to his incarnation, whereby he was made visible to us in his Body, and likewise in reference to the obscure Promises, and Prophecies, and Types of the Old Testament, it is call'd *his manifestation or appearance.* So the Apostle expresseth it, 1 John 3. 5. *Ye know that he was manifested to take away our Sins by which we are to understand primarily his Incarnation, his appearing in our Nature, whereby he became visible to us.* As he was God, he could not appear to us, *dwelling in light and*

glor

glory, not to be approached by us in this State of Mortality, and therefore he clothed himself in Flesh, that he might appear and become manifest to us.

appear.

The I say by his *appearing* we are primarily to understand his Incarnation: yet not only that, but likewise all that was consequent upon this, the Actions of his Life, and his Death and Resurrection; because all these concur to the producing of these happy Effects mentioned in the Text.

As in II. What is meant by *the abolishing of Death*. By this we are not to understand, that Christ by his appearance hath rooted Death out of the World, so that Men are no longer subject to it. For we see that even good Men, and those who are partakers of the benefits of Christ's Death, are still subject to the common Law of Mortality: but this expression of Christ's having *abolish'd Death*, signifies the Conquest and Victory which Christ hath gained over Death in his own Person, in that after he was dead, and laid in his Grave, he rose again from the dead, he freed himself from the

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bands of Death, and broke loose from the fetters of it, they *not being able to hold him*, as the expression is, *Act 2. 24.* and consequently hath by this victory over it, given us assurance of a Resurrection to a better Life. For since Christ hath *abolished Death*, and triumphed over it, and thereby overcome the Powers of Darkness: (for so the Apostle tells us, that *by his Death*, and that which followed it, his Resurrection from the Dead, *he hath destroyed him that had the power of Death, that is, the Devil*.) The Devil he contributed all he could to the death of Christ, by tempting *Judas* to betray him, and engaging all his Instruments in the procuring of it, as he had before brought in Death into the World, by tempting the first Man to Sin, upon which Death inflicted; thus far he prevailed, and thought his Kingdom was safe, having procured the death of him who was so great an Enemy to it: but Christ, by rising from the Dead, defeats the Devil of his design, and plainly conquers him, who had arrogated to himself the power of Death;) I say, since Christ hath thus vanquish'd Death and triumph'd over it, and him that

from had the power of it, Death hath lost its dominion, and Christ hath taken the whole power and disposal of it; as you find, *Rev. 1. 18. I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of Hell and of Death.* Now Christ hath not only thus conquer'd Death for himself, but likewise for all those who believe on him; so that Death shall not be able to keep them for ever under its Power: but Christ by the same Power whereby he raised up himself from the Dead, will also *quicken our mortal Bodies*, and raise them up to a new Life; for he keeps *the Keys of Hell and Death*; and as a Reward of his Sufferings and Submission to Death, he hath Power conferred upon him, *to give Eternal Life to as many as he pleases.* In this Sense, Death, tho it be not quite chased out of the World, yet it is virtually and in effect *abolish'd by the appearance of Jesus Christ*, having in a great measure lost its Power and Dominion; and since Christ hath assur'd us of a final rescue from it, the Power of it is render'd insignificant and inconsiderable, and the Sting and Terror of it is taken away. So the A-

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postle tells us in the forementioned place, *Heb. 2. 14, 15.* That Christ having by Death destroyed him who had the power of Death, that is the Devil, he hath delivered those who through fear of Death, were all their life time subject to Bondage. And not only the Power and Terror of Death is for the present in a great measure taken away; but it shall at last be utterly destroyed. So the Apostle tells us, *1 Cor. 15. 26.* *The last Enemy that shall be destroyed is Death;* which makes the Apostle, in the latter end of this Chapter, to break forth into that Triumph, *ver. 54, 55.* *So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the Saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory?*

III. What is here meant by bringing Life and Immortality to light. Life and Immortality, is here by a frequent Hebraism put for *immortal Life*; as also immediately before the Text, you find Purpose and Grace, put for God's gracious Purpose. The Phrase of bringing

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ing to light is spoken of things which were before either wholly or in a great measure hid, either were not at all discovered before, or not so clearly. Now because the Heathens by the light of Nature, had some probable conjectures and hopes concerning another Life after this, they were in some measure perswaded, that when Men died, they were not wholly extinguish'd, but did pass into another World, and did there receive Rewards suited to their carriage and demeanor in this Life; and because the Jews also, before Christ, had these natural suggestions and hopes strengthened and confirmed by Revelations, which God made unto them under the Old Testament, therefore we cannot understand this Phrase of Christ's *bringing immortal Life to light* absolutely, as if it were wholly a new discovery, which the World had no apprehension of before; but only comparatively, as a thing which was now render'd, by the coming of Christ into the World, incomparably more evident and manifest. *Quicquid enim Philosophi, quicquid Rabbinæ eâ de re dicunt, tenebræ sunt, si ad evangelii lucem comparentur: Whatever*

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*ever the Philosophers, whatever the Rab-
bins say of this matter, is but darkness,
compared to the clear Light and Revela-
tion of the Gospel. I proceed to the*

*Second thing I proposed, viz. To
shew what Christ's coming into the
World hath done towards the abolish-
ing of Death, and the bringing of Life
and Immortality to light. I shall speak
distinctly to these two.*

*I. What Christ's appearance and com-
ing into the World hath done to-
wards the abolishing of Death, or how
Death is abolish'd by the appearance of
Christ. I have already shewn in the
explication, that this Phrase, The abo-
lishing of Death, signifies the conquest
which he made over Death in his
own Person for himself; the Fruit
of which Victory redounds to us. For
in that Christ by his Divine Power
did conquer it, and set himself free
from the bands of it, this shews that
the Power of it is now brought into
other Hands, that *Christ hath the Keys of
Hell and Death*; so that tho the Devil,
by tempting to Sin, brought Death
into the World, yet it shall not be in
his*

*

his

his Power to keep Men always under the Power of it; and hereby the Terror of this great Enemy is in a good measure taken away, and he shall at last be totally destroyed, by the same Hand that hath already given him his mortal Wound.

Now this is said to be done by *the appearing of Jesus Christ*, for as much as by his coming into the World, and taking our Nature upon him, he became capable of encountering this Enemy and overcoming him, in such a manner as might give us assurance of a final Victory over it, and for the present comfort and encourage us against the fears of it. For,

1. By taking our Nature upon him, he became subject to the frailties and miseries of Mortality, and liable to the suffering of Death, by which expiation of Sin was made. Sin was the cause of Death. So the Apostle tells us, *By Man Sin enter'd into the World, and Death by Sin, so that Death came upon all.* Now the way to cure this Malady which was come upon our Nature, and to remove this great Mischief

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chief which was come into the World, is by taking away the meritorious Cause of it, which is the guilt of Sin. Now this Christ hath taken away by his Death. Christ, that he might *abolish Death*, hath appeared for the *abolition of Sin*. So the Apostle tells us, Heb. 9. 26, 27, 28. *But now once in the end of the World hath he appeared, to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself, eis ἀἰῶνος ἀπαλλαγῆς, for the abolishing of Sin*: and to shew that this was intended as a Remedy of the great mischief and inconvenience of Mortality, which Sin had brought upon Mankind, the Apostle immediately adds in the next verse, that *as it is appointed unto all men once to die, so Christ was once offer'd to bear the sins of many*; and by this means the Sting of Death is taken away, and Death in effect conquered; the Consideration of which makes the Apostle break out into that thankful Triumph, 1 Cor. 15. 55, 56, 57. *O Death, where is thy Sting? O Grave, where is thy Victory? The Sting of Death is Sin: But thanks be to God, which giveth us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

2. As Christ by taking our Nature upon him became capable of suffering Death, and thereby making expiation for Sin; so by dying he became capable of rising again from the Dead, whereby he hath gained a perfect Victory and Conquest over Death and the Power of Darkness. And this account the Apostle gives us of Christ's taking our Nature upon him, as being one of the principal Ends and Designs of it, *Heb. 2. 14, 15, 16. For as much then as the Children are partakers of Flesh and Blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through Death he might destroy him that had the Power of Death, that is, the Devil;* that is, that by taking our Nature upon him, he might be capable of encountering this Enemy, that is, of encountering Death in his own Territories, and beating him in his own Quarters; and by rising out of his Grave, he might give us full and comfortable assurance of the Possibility of being rescued from the Power of the Grave, and recovered out of the Jaws of Death. And therefore the Wisdom of God pitched upon this way, as that which

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which was most fit and proper to encourage and bear us up against the Terrors of this Enemy; and by giving us a lively instance and example of a Victory over Death, atchieved by one clothed with Mortality like our selves, *we might have strong consolation and good hope through grace*, and might be fully assur'd that he who had conquer'd this Enemy for himself, was able also to conquer him for us, and to deliver us from the Grave. Therefore the Apostle reasons from the fitness and suitableness of this Dispensation, as if no other Argument could have been so proper to arm us against the fears of Death, and to satisfy us that we should not always be held under the Power of it; *For as much as the Children are partakers of Flesh and Blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through Death he might destroy him that had the Power of Death, and deliver them who through fear of Death, &c.* The force of which Argument is this, That seeing Men are of a mortal Nature (for that he means by *being partakers of Flesh and Blood*) nothing can be a greater comfort to us against the fears

of

of Death, than to see Death conquer'd by Flesh and Blood, by one of the same Nature with our selves. Therefore the Apostle adds, *ver. 16. For verily he took not on him the Nature of Angels; but the Seed of Abraham.* If he had assumed the Angelical Nature, which is Immortal, this would not have been so sensible a Conviction to us of the possibility of it, as to have a lively instance and example presented us, of one in our Nature conquering Death, and triumphing over the Grave. I proceed to the

II. Thing, What Christ hath done towards *the bringing of life and immortality to light.* And because I told you that this is comparatively spoken, and signifies to us a greater degree of evidence, and a firmer assurance given us by the Christian Religion, than the World had before, therefore it will be requisite to inquire into these *two things.*

First, What Assurance Men had or might have had of the Immortality of the Soul, and a future State, before the coming of Christ into the World,

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World, and the Revelation of the Gospel.

Secondly, What greater Evidence, and what higher degree of Assurance the Gospel now gives us of Immortal Life; what greater Arguments this new Revelation and Discovery of God to the World doth furnish us with, to perswade us of this matter, than the World was acquainted withal before.

First, What Assurance Men had or might have had of the Immortality of the Soul, and consequently of a future State, before the Revelation of the Gospel by Christ's coming into the World. And here are *two* things distinctly to be consider'd.

First, What Arguments natural Reason doth furnish us withal, to perswade us of this Principle, That our Souls are Immortal, and that there is another State remains for Men after this Life.

Secondly, What Assurance *de fact* the World had of this Principle, before

the fore Christ's coming into the World :
what the Heathens, and what the
Jews had. - The Reason why I shall
speak to these distinctly, is, because
they are *two* very different inquiries ;
What Assurance Men might have had
from the Principles of natural Rea-
son concerning this matter, and what
Assurance they had *de facto*. I begin
with the

First, What Arguments natural Rea-
son doth furnish us withal, to perswade
us to this Principle, that our Souls are
Immortal, and consequently that a-
nother State remains for Men after this
Life. And here I shall shew,

I. How much may be said for it.

II. How little can be said against
it. But before I come to speak parti-
cularly to the Arguments, which na-
tural Reason affords us for the Proof
of this Principle, I shall premise cer-
tain general Considerations, which
may give light and force to the follow-
ing Arguments. As,

First, By the Soul we mean a part
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of Man distinct from his Body, or a Principle in him which is not Matter. I chuse rather to describe it this way, than by the essential Properties of it, which are hard to fix upon, and are more remote from common apprehension. Our Saviour, when he would convince his Disciples, after his Resurrection, that the Body wherein he appeared to them was a real Body, and that he was not a *Spirit* or Apparition, he bids them *touch and handle him*; for, says he, *a Spirit hath not Flesh and Bones, as ye see me to have*. So that by the Soul or Spirit of a Man, we mean some Principle in Man, which is really distinct from his visible and sensible part, from all that in Man which affects our outward Senses, and which is not to be described by any sensible and external Qualities, such as we use to describe a Body by: because it is supposed to be of such a Nature, as does not fall under the cognizance and notice of any of our Senses. And therefore I describe it, by removing from it all those Qualities and Properties which belong to that which falls under our Senses, *viz.* That it is something in Man

Man distinct from his Body, a Principle in him which is not Matter; that Principle which is the Cause of those several Operations, which by inward Sense and Experience we are conscious to our selves of; such are Perception, Understanding, Memory, Will. So that the most plain and popular notion that we can have of the Soul, is, that it is something in us which we never saw, and which is the cause of those effects which we find in our selves; it is the Principle whereby we are conscious to our selves, that we perceive such and such Objects, that we see, or hear, or perceive any thing by any other Sense; it is that whereby we think and remember, whereby we reason about any thing, and do freely chuse and refuse such things as are presented to us. These Operations every one is conscious to himself of, and that which is the Principle of these, or the Cause from whence these proceed, is that which we mean by the Soul.

Secondly, By the Immortality of the Soul, I mean nothing else, but that

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it survives the Body, that when the Body dies and falls to the Ground, yet this Principle which we call the Soul, still remains and lives separate from it; that is, there is still a part of us which is free from the fate of the Body, and continues to perform all those Operations, to the performance of which the Organs of the Body are not necessary; that is, when our Bodies are destitute of Life, and become a dead Carcase, there is still something that did belong to us, which retains the Power of Understanding, which thinks, and reasons, and remembers, and does all these freely.

Thirdly, That he that goes about to prove the Soul's Immortality, supposeth the Existence of a Deity, that there is a God. For altho there be a very intimate and strict connexion between these two Principles as to us, as being the two great Pillars of all Religion; yet that which is first and most fundamental to all Religion, is the Existence of a God; which if it be not first proved, the best Arguments for the Soul's Immortality lose their

their force. Therefore as to the present Argument, I suppose the Being of God as a thing acknowledged, and not now to be proved; which I may the better do, having formerly endeavour'd to make good this grand Principle of Religion, against the Pretensions of the Atheists.

Fourthly, The Existence of a God being supposed, this doth very much facilitate the other, of the Soul's Immortality. For this being an essential Property of the Divine Nature, that he is a Spirit, that is, something that is not matter; it being once granted that God is, thus much is gained, that there is such a thing as a Spirit, as an immaterial substance, that is no liable to die or perish: so that he that goes about to prove the Immortality of the Soul, shall not need to prove that there may be such a thing as a Spirit, that the notion of an immaterial Substance does not imply a Contradiction; because, supposing that there is a God, who is essentially a Spirit, there can be no doubt of the Possibility of such a thing as a Spirit; and tho there be this difference

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rence between God and all other Spirits, that he is an infinite Spirit, whereas others are but finite ; yet no Man that grants the Existence of an infinite Spirit, can with any pretence or colour of Reason deny the possibility of a finite Spirit.

Fifthly, and lastly, It is highly reasonable that Men should acquiesce and rest satisfied in such Reasons and Arguments for the Proof of any thing, as the nature of the thing to be proved will bear ; because there are several kinds and degrees of Evidence, which all things are not equally capable of. It is sufficient that the Evidence be such as the Nature of the thing to be proved will admit of, and such as prudent Men make no scruple to admit for sufficient Evidence for things of the like nature, and such as, supposing the thing to be, we cannot ordinarily expect better or greater Evidence for it.

There are two kinds of Evidence, which are the highest and most satisfactory that this World affords to us, and those are the Evidence of Sense, and

and Mathematical Demonstration. Now there are many things, concerning which the generality of Men profess themselves to be well satisfied, which do not afford either of these kinds of Evidence. There's none of us but do firmly believe that we were born, tho we do not remember any such thing; no Man's Memory does furnish him with the Testimony of his Senses for this Matter, nor can any Man prove this by a Mathematical Demonstration, nor by any necessary Argument, so as to shew it impossible that the thing should be otherwise. For it is possible that a Man may come into the World otherwise, than by the ordinary course of Generation, as the first Man did, who was created immediately by God; and yet I know no Man in the World who doubts in the least concerning this matter, tho he have no other Argument for it, but the Testimony of others, and his own Observation, how other Persons like himself came into the World. And 'tis reasonable to acquiesce in this Evidence, because the Nature of the thing affords no greater. We who never were at Jerusalem,

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less, do firmly believe that there is such a place, upon the Testimony and Relation of others: and no Man is blamed for this, as being over-credulous; because no Man, that will not take the pains to go thither, can have any other greater Evidence of it, than the general Testimony of those who say they have seen it. And indeed almost all Human Affairs, I am sure the most important, are governed and conducted by such Evidence, as falls very much short both of the Evidence of Sense, and of Mathematical Demonstration.

To apply this then to my present purpose. That the Soul of Man is of an Immortal Nature, is not capable of all kinds and degrees of Evidence. It cannot be proved by our Senses, nor is it reasonable to expect it should be so proved; because the Soul is supposed, by every one that discourseth of it, to be a thing of such a Nature, as cannot be seen or handled, or fall under any other of our Senses: nor can it be proved to us by our own experience, while we are in this World, because whoever dies, which is the

only

only Trial can be made whether our Souls remain after our Bodies, goes out of this World. As for Mathematical Demonstration, the Nature of the thing renders it incapable of it. It remains then that we rest contented with such Arguments as the Nature of the thing will bear, and with such Evidence as Men are contented to accept of, and do account sufficient in other Matters; such Evidence as a prudent considering Man, who is not credulous on the one hand, and on the other is not prejudiced by any Interest against it, would rest satisfied in.

Having premised these general Considerations, to clear my way, I now come to speak to the particular Arguments, whereby the Immortality of the Soul may be made out to our Reason. And the best way to estimate the force of the Arguments which I shall bring for it, will be to consider before-hand with our selves, what Evidence we can in reason expect for a thing of this Nature. Suppose our Souls be Immortal; by what kind of Arguments could we desire to be assured

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red of it? Setting aside Miracles and of th
Divine Revelation, could we defi these
more than this? say t
doth

I. That the thing be a natural Nor
tion and Dictate of our Minds. and
it is

II. That it doth not contradict an mak
other Principle that Nature hath plante may
in us, but does very well accord an Soul
agree with all other the most natura by a
Notions of our Minds. use
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III. That it be sutable to our natura ted
Fears and Hopes. he
thin

IV. That it tends to the Happiness cau
of Man, and the good Order and Go deli
vernment of the World. pro
dit

V. That it gives the most rational goo
account of all those inward Actions gun
which we are conscious to our selves ma
of, as Perception, Understanding, Me ind
mory, Will, which we cannot with self
out great unreasonableness ascribe to Sou
Matter, as the Cause of them. If al cer
these be thus, as I shall endeavour to po
make it appear they are, what greater the
satisfaction could we desire to have

of the Immortality of our Souls, than these Arguments give us? I do not say that any one of these Arguments doth sufficiently conclude this thing; nor is it necessary, that taken singly and by themselves they should do it; it is sufficient that they concur to make up one entire Argument, which may be a sufficient Evidence of the Soul's Immortality. To illustrate this by an instance. Suppose a Man should use these *two* Arguments, to prove that such a Man deserves to be credited in such a Relation. *First*, Because he had sufficient knowledg of the thing he relates; and, *Secondly*, Because he is a Man of Integrity and Fidelity. Neither of these alone would prove the Man to be worthy of Credit; tho both together make up a good Argument. So 'tis in these Arguments which I have produced; it may be, no one of them is a sufficient inducement, taken singly and by itself, to satisfy a Man fully that the Soul is Immortal; and yet they may concur together to make a very powerful Argument. I begin with the

I. That

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I. That our Souls are of an Immortal Nature, that they do not die and perish with our Bodies, but pass into another State upon the Dissolution of our Bodies, is a natural Notion and Dictate of our Minds. That I call a natural Notion, which the Minds of all Men do naturally hit upon and agree in, notwithstanding the distance and remoteness of the several Parts of the World from one another, notwithstanding the different tempers and manner and ways of Education. The only way to measure whether any thing be natural or not, is by inquiring whether it agree to the whole kind or not: if it do, then we call it natural. *Omnium consensus naturæ vox est, The consent of all is the voice of Nature*, says Tully, speaking of the Universal Agreement of all Nations in their apprehension, that the Souls of Men remain after their Bodies. And this he tells us he looks upon as a very great Argument, *Maximum verè Argumentum est, naturam ipsam de Immortalitate animarum tacitam judicare, Quod omnibus cura sint & maximè quidem quæ post mortem futura sunt*: This is a very great

Argument

Argument that Nature doth secretly,
and in Mens silent thoughts determine
the Immortality of the Soul, That all Men
are solicitous of what shall become of
them after death. *Nescio quomodo inha-*
ret in mentibus quasi seculorum quod-
dam augurium futurorum, idque in max-
imis ingeniis altissimisque animis & ex-
istit maxime & apparet facillime: I
know not how (saith he) there sticks
in the Mind a certain kind of presage
of a future State, and this is most
deeply fixt and discovers it self soonest
in the choicest Spirits. Again the same
Author, *Ut Deos esse naturâ opinamur,*
sic permanere animos arbitramur consen-
su nationum omnium: As this Opinion is
planted in us by Nature, That there is a
God, so by the consent of all Nations
we believe that Souls remain after the
Body. I might multiply Testimonies
to this purpose out of the antient
Heathen Writers; but these which I
have produced out of this great Au-
thor, are so plain and expreis, that I
need bring no other.

As for those barbarous Nations
which have been discovered in these
latter Ages of the World, and which
before

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before the first planting of *America* were never known to have held Correspondence with these Parts of the World, yet all those Nations agree in this Principle, of the Immortality of the Soul; nay even the most barbarous of those Nations, those who are most inhuman and eat one another, those of *Joupinamboult* in *Brazil* who are said by some Authors, but think not upon sufficient grounds not to acknowledg the Being of God; yet even these (as *Lerius* tells us, who lived among them) had very fixt and firm perswasion of the Principle of Religion, the Immortality of the Soul. *There is not, says he, any Nation in the World more remote from all Religion than these were; to shew that there is some light in the midst of this darkness, I can, says he, truly affirm, that they have not only some apprehensions of the Immortality of the Soul, but a most confident perswasion of it. Their opinion, says he, is that the Souls of stout and valiant Men after death fly beyond the highest Mountains and there are gathered to their Fathers and Grand-Fathers, and live in pleasant Gardens, with all manner of*

light

lights; but the Souls of slothful and un-
active Men, and those who do nothing
for their Country, are carried to Aygman
(so they call the Devil) and live with
him in perpetual Torments. The like
Xaverius and others, who laboured in
the Conversion of the remote Parts of
the East-Indies, tell us concerning those
Nations, that they found them gene-
rally possess'd with this Principle, of the
Soul's Immortality.

Now what will we call a Natural
Notion, if not that which Mankind
in all places of the World, in all Ages,
so far as History informs, did uni-
versally agree in? What Evidence
greater than this can any Man give,
to shew that any thing is natural?
And if we believe a God, (which I
told you I do all along in this Argu-
ment suppose to be already proved)
can we imagine that this Wise and
Good God would plant such a notion
and apprehension in the Understand-
ings of Men, as would put an univer-
sal Cheat and Delusion upon Human
Nature?

And that the Universal Consent of
all

Vol. 9. all Nations in this Principle, cannot be resolved either into the Fears and groundless Jealousie and Superstition of Human Nature, nor into Universal Tradition, which had its Origin from some Impostor, nor into Reason and Policy of State, I might shew particularly: but having formerly done that, concerning the Universal Consent of all Nations in the belief of a God, and the Reason being the very same, as to this Principle of the Immortality of the Soul, I shall now need to do this over again upon this Argument.

And that some Persons, and particular Sects in the World, have disowned this Principle, is no sufficient Objection against it. It cannot be denied, but the *Epicureans* among the Philosophers, did renounce this Principle; and some also among the *Stoicks* do speak doubtfully of it. The *Sadducees* likewise among the *Jews* fell into this Error, upon a mistake and misapprehension of the Doctrine of their Master *Sadoc*, who, as *Josephus* tells us, did use to inculcate this Principle to his Scholars, That tho' there were

were no Rewards nor Punishments after this Life, yet Men ought to be good and live virtuously; from whence in process of time, by heat of Opposition against the *Pharisees*, who brought in Oral Tradition, and made it equal with the written Word of God, they fell into that Error, and denied the Souls Immortality, not finding such clear Texts for it in the Old Testament, as to them did seem fully convincing of this truth. *Xaverius* likewise tells us, that among the several Sects of Religion which he found in *Japan*, there was one which denied the Immortality of the Soul, and that there were any Spirits: but he says they were a sort of notoriously wicked and vicious Persons.

To these Instances, which are so few, and bear no proportion to the generality of Mankind; I have these two things to say.

1. That no Argument can be drawn, *monstro ad naturam*. A thing may be natural, and yet some instances may be brought to the contrary: but these are but few in comparison, and like

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Monsters,

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Monsters, which are no Argument against *Nature*. No Man will deny that it is natural for Men to have two Eyes, and five Fingers upon a Hand; tho there are several instances of Men born but with one Eye, and with four or six Fingers.

2. But especially in matters of Religion and Discourse, which are subject to Liberty, Men may offer violence to Nature, and to gratify their Lusts and Interests, may by false reasonings debauch their Understanding and by long striving against the natural bent and byass of it, may alter their apprehensions of things, and perswade others to the same: but nothing that is against Nature can prevail very far but Nature will still be endeavouring to recover it self, and to free it self from the violence which is offered to it. So that Mens Understanding left to themselves, and not having some false byass put upon them, out of a design of Pride and Singularity in Opinion, which was the case of *Epicurus*; or out of the Interest of some Lust, and a design to set Men at Liberty to Sin, which is the case

a natural Notion.

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of most who have renounced this Principle; I say, nothing but one of these two can ordinarily make Men deny the Immortality of the Soul. Thus I have done with the *first* Argument, namely that the Immortality of the Soul is a natural Notion and Dictate of our Minds.

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SERMON II.

Of the Immortality of the Soul, as
discover'd by Nature, and by
Revelation.

The Second Sermon on this Text.

2 TIM. I. 10.

*But is now made manifest by the appearing
of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath
abolished Death, and hath brought
Life and Immortality to light, through
the Gospel.*

I Proceed to the *Second* Argument,
That this Notion or Principle of
the Immortality of the Soul, doth
not contradict any other Principle
that Nature hath planted in us, but
doth very well accord and agree with

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all those other Notions which are the most natural. I shall mention two which seem to be the most natural Notions that we have, and the most deeply rooted in our Natures; the one is the Existence and the Perfection of God; and the other, the difference of Good and Evil. Mankind universally agree in these two Principles, that there is a God who is essentially good and just; and that there is a real difference between good and evil, which is not founded in the Opinion and Imagination of Persons or in the Custom and Usage of the World, but in the nature of things. Now this Principle of the Immortality of the Soul, and future Reward after this Life, is so far from clashing with either of these Principles, that the contrary Assertion, *viz.* that our Souls are mortal, and that there is nothing to be hoped for, or feared beyond this Life, would very much contradict those other Principles. I shew this then particularly;

1. The Immortality of the Soul very agreeable to the natural Notion which we have of God, one part where

whereof is, that he is essentially good and just.

(1.) For his Goodness. It is very agreeable to *that*, to think that God would make some Creatures for as long a duration as they are capable of. The Wisdom of God hath chosen to display it self, in creating variety of things of different Degrees and Perfections; things devoid of Life and Sense; and several degrees and orders of sensitive Creatures, of different Shapes and Figures, of different magnitude, some vastly great, others extremely little, others of a middle sort between these. And himself being a pure Spirit, we have no reason to doubt, but he could make Creatures of a spiritual Nature, and such as should have no principle of self-Corruption in them. And seeing he could make Creatures of such Perfection, if we believe him to be essentially good, we have no reason to doubt, but that he hath done so. For it is the very nature of Goodness, to communicate and diffuse it self, and to delight in doing so; and we cannot imagine, but that the same Goodness

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ness which prompted and inclined him to give Being to those Creatures which are of an inferior degree of Perfection, would move him likewise to make Creatures more perfect, and capable of greater degrees of Happiness, and of a longer Enjoyment of it, if it were in his Power to make such; and no Man that believes the Omnipotency of God can doubt of this. For he who by a pure Act of his Will can command things to be, and in an instant to start out of nothing, can as easily make one sort of Creatures as another. Now the Power of God being supposed, his Goodness secures us of his Will: for we cannot imagine any such thing as Envy, in a Being which we suppose to be perfectly good; nothing being more inconsistent with perfect Goodness, than to be unwilling to communicate Happiness to others, and to grudge that others should partake of it.

Now this being supposed, that God could and would make Creatures of a spiritual and immortal Nature and the utmost imaginable Perfection

of such Creatures being Knowledge and Liberty, wherever these Perfections are found, we have reason to conclude that Creature to be endowed with a Principle that is of a spiritual and immortal Nature. Now these Perfections of Understanding and Will being found in Man, this argues him to be endowed with such a Principle, as is in its own Nature capable of an immortal Duration.

'Tis true indeed, this spiritual part of Man, which we call his Soul, is united to a visible and material part, viz. his Body; the Union of which Parts constitutes a peculiar sort of Creature, which is *utriusque mundi nexus*, unites the material and immaterial World, the World of Matter and of Spirits. And as it is very futable to the Wisdom of God, which delights in variety, that there should be a sort of Creatures compounded of both these Principles, Matter and Spirit; so it is very agreeable to his Goodness, to think that he would design such Creatures for as long a Duration and Continuance as they were capable of. For as it is the effect of Goodness to

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to bring Creatures forth into the possession of that Life and Happiness which they are capable of; so to continue them in the Enjoyment of it so long as they are capable.

The sum of all this is; that as it is agreeable to the Wisdom of God, who made the World, to display it self in all variety of Creatures; so it is agreeable to his Goodness, to make some of as perfect a Kind as Creatures are capable of being. Now it being no repugnancy nor contradiction, that a Creature should be of a spiritual and immortal Nature, we have no reason to think, but that the fruitfulness of the Divine Goodness hath brought forth such Creatures; and if there be reason to conclude any thing to be of a spiritual and immortal Nature, certainly the Principle of understanding and liberty which we are conscious of in our selves deserves to be reputed such.

(2.) It is very agreeable to the Justice of God, to think the Souls of Men remain after this Life, that there may be a state of Reward and Recompence in another World. If we believe God

to be Holy and Just, we cannot but believe that he loves Righteousness and Goodness, and hates Iniquity; and that as he is Governour and publick Magistrate of the World, he is concerned to countenance and encourage the one, and to vindicate and discourage the other. Now the Providences of God being in a great measure promiscuously administer'd in this World; so that no Man can make any certain Judgment of God's love and hatred towards Persons, by what befalls them in this World, it being the lot of good Men many times to suffer and be afflicted, and of wicked Men to live in a flourishing and prosperous condition; I say, things being thus, it is very agreeable to these Notions which we have of the Divine Holiness and Justice, to believe that there will a time come, when this wise and just Governour of the World will make a wide and visible difference between the Righteous and the Wicked; so that tho' for a while the Justice of God may be clouded, yet there will a time come when it shall be clearly manifested, and every Eye see it and bear witness to it, when *Judgment shall break forth as the light, and Righteousness as the*

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the noon day. It is possible that Sin for a while may go unpunish'd, nay, triumph and prosper; and that Virtue and Innocence may not only be unrewarded, but oppress'd and despised, and persecuted. And this may be reconcilable enough to the Wisdom of God's Providence, and the Justice of it, supposing the Immortality of the Soul, and another state after this Life, wherein all things shall be set strait, and every Man shall receive according to his works: but unless this be supposed, it is impossible to solve the Justice of God's Providence. Who will believe that the affairs of the World are administer'd by him who loves Righteousness, and hates all the workers of iniquity, who will not let the least service that is done to him pass unrewarded, nor on the other hand acquit the guilty, and let Sin go unpunish'd, which are the Properties of Justice; I say, Who will believe this, that looks into the course of the World, and sees with how little difference and distinction of good and bad, the affairs of it are manag'd? That sees Virtue discountenanced and despised, poor and destitute, afflicted and tormented; when

when wickedness is many times exalted to high places, and makes a great noise and ruffle in the World? He that considers what a hazard many times good Men run, how for goodness sake they venture, and many times quit all the Contentments and Enjoyments of this Life, and submit to the greatest Sufferings and Calamities that human Nature is capable of; while in the mean time prosperity is poured into the lap of the wicked, and Heaven seems to look pleasantly upon those that deal treacherously, and to be silent whilst the wicked devours the Man that is more Righteous than himself; he that considers this, and can without supposing another Life after this, pretend to vindicate the Justice of these things, must be as blind as the Fortune that governs them. Would not this be a perpetual stain and blemish upon the Divine Providence, that *Abel*, who offered up a better Sacrifice than *Cain*, and had this testimony, that he pleased God, yet after all this, should have no other reward for it, but to be slain by his Brother, who had offended God by a slight and contemptuous Offering? If there were no Reward to be expected after

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this life, would not this have been a sad Example to the World, to see one of the first Men that served God acceptably, thus rewarded? What a pitiful Encouragement would it be to Men to be good, to see profane *Esau* blest with the dew of Heaven, and the fatness of the Earth; and to hear good old *Jacob* in the end and conclusion of his days, to complain, *Few and evil have the days of my Pilgrimage been?* If this had been the end of *Esau* and *Jacob*, it would puzzle all the wit and reason of Mankind, to wipe off this reproach from the Providence of God, and vindicate the Justice of it. And therefore I do not wonder, that the greatest Wits among the Heathen Philosophers, were so much puzzled with this Objection against the Providence of God; If the Wise, and Just, and Good God do administer the Affairs of the World, and be concerned in the good or bad Actions of Men, *cur bonis male & malis bene?* How comes it to pass, that good Men many times are miserable, and bad Men so happy in the World? And they had no other way to wipe off this Objection, but by referring these things to another World, wherein the temporal sufferings

sufferings of good Men should be eternally rewarded; and the short and transient happiness of wicked Men should be rendered insignificant, and drowned in an eternity of misery.

So that if we believe the Being of God, and the Providence of God; (which I do all along take for granted in this Argument) there's no other way imaginable to solve the Equity and Justice of God's Providence, but upon this supposition, that there is another life after this. For to say, That Virtue is a sufficient and abundant Reward for it self, tho it have some truth in it, if we set aside those sufferings and miseries and calamities, which Virtue is frequently attended with in this Life; yet if these be taken in, it is but a very jejune and dry speculation. For considering the strong propension and inclination of human Nature to avoid these Evils and Inconveniences, a state of Virtue attended with great sufferings, would be so far from being a Happiness, that it would be a real misery; so that the determination of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 15. 19. is according to nature, and the truth and reason of things, that, *If in this Life only*

we

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we had hope, we were of all Men most miserable. For altho it be true, that as things now stand, and as the nature of Man is framed, good Men do find a strange kind of inward pleasure and secret satisfaction of mind in the discharge of their Duty, and in doing what is virtuous; yet every Man that looks into himself, and consults his own Breast, will find that this delight and contentment springs chiefly from the hopes which Men conceive, that a holy and virtuous Life shall not be unrewarded: and without these hopes Virtue is but a dead and empty name; and notwithstanding the reasonableness of virtuous Actions compar'd with the contrary of them, yet when Virtue came to be encumbered with difficulties, and to be attended with such sufferings and inconveniences, as were grievous and intolerable to human Nature, then it would appear unreasonable to chuse that for a happiness, which wou'd rob a Man of all the felicity of his Life. For tho a Man were never so much in love with Virtue, for the native beauty and comeliness of it; yet it would strangely cool his affection to it, to consider that he should be
undone

undone by the match, that when he had it he must go a begging with it, and be in danger of Death, for the sake of that which he had chosen for the felicity of his Life. So that how devout soever the Woman might be, yet I dare say she was not over-wise and considerate, who going about with a Pitcher of Water in one hand, and a Pan of Coals in the other, and being asked what she intended to do with them, answered; " That she intended
 " with the one to burn up Heaven, and
 " with the other to quench Hell, that
 " Men might love God and Virtue for
 " their own sakes, without hope of
 " Reward, or fear of Punishment.

And the consequence of this dry Doctrine, does sufficiently appear in the Sect of the *Sadduces*, which had its rise from this Principle of *Sadoc*, the Master of the Sect, who out of an indiscreet zeal to teach something above others, and indeed above the pitch of human Nature, inculcated this Doctrine upon his Scholars, that Religion and Virtue ought to be loved for themselves, tho there were no Reward of Virtue to be hoped, nor Punish-

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Serm.2.

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ment of Vice to be feared in another World; from which his Disciples inferred, that it was not necessary to Religion to believe a future state, and in process of time, peremptorily maintained that there was no life after this. For they did not only deny the Resurrection of the Body, but as *St. Paul* tells us, they said, that *there was neither Angel nor Spirit*; that is, they denied that there was any thing of an immortal Nature, that did remain after this Life. And what the consequence of this was, we may see in the Character which *Josephus* gives of that Sect; for he tells us, that the Commonalty of the *Jews* were of the Sect of the *Pharisees*, but most of the great and rich Men were *Sadduces*; which plainly shews, that this dry speculation of loving Religion and Virtue for themselves, without any expectation of future Rewards, did end in their giving over all serious pursuit of Religion; and because they hoped for nothing after this life, therefore laying aside all other considerations, they applied themselves to the present business of this Life, and grasp'd as much of the present Enjoyments of its Power and Riches,

Riches, as they could by any means attain to.

Serm. 2.

And for a farther Evidence of this, that it is only or principally the hopes of a future Happiness that bear Men up in the pursuit of Virtue, that give them so much comfort and satisfaction in the prosecution of it, and make Men enounter the difficulties, and oppositions, and persecutions they meet withal in the ways of Religion, with so much undauntedness and courage, I say, for the farther Evidence of this, I shall only offer this Consideration, That according to the degree of this Hope and Assurance of another Life, Mens Constancy and Courage in the ways of Virtue and Religion have been. Before Christ's coming into the World, and *the bringing of Life and Immortality to light by the Gospel*, we do not find in all Ages of the World, so many instances of patience and constant suffering for Religion, as hapned in the first Age after Christ. God did not think fit to try the World so much in this kind, till they were furnish'd with a Principle which would bear them up under the greatest sufferings,

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which was nothing else but the full assurance which the Gospel gave the World of a blessed Immortality after this Life; the firm belief and persuasion of which, made Christians dead to the World, and all the Contentments and Enjoyments of it, and by raising them above all the pleasures and terrors of sense, made them to despise present things, *in hopes of eternal Life, which God that could not lie had promised.* This was that which set them above the fears of Death, so that they were not to be frightened out of their Religion by the most exquisite Torments, and all the most horrid and fearful shapes that the malice of Men and Devils could dress up Misery and Affliction in. Whereas under the old Dispensation of the Law, before the Revelation of the Gospel, when the promises of eternal Life were not so clear, and Mens hopes of it more weak and faint, the express Encouragement to Obedience was founded in the promises of temporal Blessings; God herein complying with the necessity of human Nature, which is not to be wrought upon to any great purpose, but by Arguments of Advantage.

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The sum of this Argument, which I have thus largely dilated upon, because I look upon it as one of the most strong and convincing of the Soul's Immortality, is this; That the Justice of God's Providence cannot sufficiently be vindicated, but upon the supposal of this Principle of the Soul's Immortality: Whereas if this Principle be admitted, that Men pass out of this life into an eternal state of Happiness or Misery, according as they have behaved themselves in this World; then the account of the unequal Providences of God in this World is easie. For if we look upon this Life as a state of probation, of tryal to wicked Men, and of exercise to good Men in order to a future and eternal state; and if we consider withal, how vast the difference is between Time and Eternity, it will be easie then to apprehend how all things may be set streight in another World, and how the Righteousness of God may appear, in giving an abundant recompence to good Men for all their temporal Service and Sufferings, which do but prepare them the more for a quicker re-

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lish of the Glory and Happiness which is reserved for them; and on the other hand, in punishing wicked Men, whose short ease and prosperity in this World will, by the just Judgment of God for their abuse of the Blessings of this Life, set out their Misery and Torment to the greatest disadvantage. For as nothing commends Happiness more than precedent Sorrow; so nothing makes Pain and Suffering more bitter and intolerable, than to step into them out of a state of ease and pleasure; so that the pleasures and prosperity of wicked Men in this life, consider'd with the punishment of the next, which will follow upon them, is an addition to their Misery. This is the very sting of the second Death; and in this sense also that of the wise Man is true, *The ease of the simple will slay them, and the prosperity of these fools shall be the great aggravation of their destruction.*

2. Another Notion which is deeply rooted in the Nature of Man, is, that there is a difference between Good and Evil, which is not founded in the imagination of Persons, or in the Custom and

and Usage of the World, but in the Nature of things; that there are some things which have a natural evil, and turpitude, and deformity in them; for Example, impiety and profaneness towards God, injustice and unrighteousness towards Men, perfidiousness, injury, ingratitude, these are things that are not only condemned by the positive Laws and Constitutions of particular Nations and Governments, but by the general verdict and sentiments of Humanity. Piety and Religion toward God, Justice, and Righteousness, and Fidelity, and Reverence of Oaths, regard to a Man's word and promise, and Gratitude towards those who have oblig'd us, these and the like Qualities, which we call Virtues, are not only well spoken of, where they are countenanced by the Authority of Law, but have the tacit approbation and veneration of Mankind: And any Man that thinks that these things are not naturally and in themselves good, but are meerly arbitrary, and depend upon the pleasure of Authority, and the Will of those who have the power of imposing Laws upon others; I say, any such Person may easily be convinc'd of

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his error, by putting this supposition; Suppose Wickedness were establish'd by a Law, and the Practice of fraud, and rapine, and perjury, falseness in a Man's word and promises, were commended and rewarded, and it were made a Crime for any Man to be honest, to have any regard to his Oath or Promise, and the Man that should dare to be honest or make good his word, should be severely punish'd and made a publick Example; I say, suppose the reverse of all that which we now call Virtue, were solemnly enacted by a Law, and publick Authority should enjoin the practice of that which we call Vice; What would the consequence of this be, when the Tables were thus turned? Would that which we now call Vice, gain the esteem and reputation of Virtue; and those things which we now call Virtue, grow contemptible and become odious to human Nature? If not, then there is a natural and intrinsecal difference between Good and Evil, between Virtue and Vice; there is something in the Nature of these things which does not depend upon arbitrary constitution. And I think nothing
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can be more evident, than that the Authority which should attempt such an establishment, would thereby be render'd ridiculous, and all Laws of such a tendency as this, would be hift out of the World. And the reason of this is plain, because no Government could subsist upon these terms: for the very forbidding Men to be just and honest, the enjoying of fraud, and violence, and perjury, and breach of trust, would apparently destroy the end of Government, which is to preserve Men and their Rights against the encroachments and inconveniences of these; and this end being destroyed, human Society would presently disband, and Men would naturally fall into a state of War; which plainly shews that there is a natural, and immutable, and eternal Reason for that which we call Goodness and Virtue, and against that which we call Vice and Wickedness.

To come then to my purpose, it is very agreeable to this natural Notion of the difference between Good and Evil, to believe the Soul's Immortality. For nothing is more reasonable to
imagine

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imagine, than that Good and Evil, as they are differenced in their Nature, so they shall be in their Rewards; that it shall one time or other be well to them that do well, and evil to the wicked Man. Now seeing this difference is not made in this World, but all things happen alike to all, the belief of this difference between Good and Evil, and the different Rewards belonging to them, infers another state after this life, which is the very thing we mean by the Soul's Immortality, namely, that it does not die with the Body, but remains after it, and passeth into a state wherein it shall receive a Reward sutable to the Actions of this Life.

And thus I have done with the *Second* Argument for the Soul's Immortality, namely, that this Principle doth not contradict those other Principles which Nature hath planted in us, but doth very well accord and agree with those natural Notions which we have of the Goodness of God, and of the Justice of his Providence, and of the real and intrinsecal difference between Good and Evil.

III. This

III. This Principle of the Soul's Immortality, is futable to the natural Hopes and Fears of Men.

1. To the natural Hopes of Men. Whence is it that Men are so desirous to purchase a lasting Fame, and to perpetuate their Memory to Posterity, but that they hope that there's something belonging to them, which shall survive the fate of the body, and when that lies in the silent Grave, shall be sensible of the honour which is done to their Memory, and shall enjoy the pleasure of the just and impartial Fame, which shall speak of them to Posterity without envy or flattery? And this is a thing incident to the greatest and most generous Spirits; none so apt as they to feed themselves with these hopes of Immortality. What was it made those great Spirits among the *Romans*, so freely to sacrifice their Lives for the safety of their Country, but an ambition that their Names might live after them, and be mentioned with honour when they were dead and gone? Which ambition of theirs, had it not been grounded

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grounded in the hopes of Immortality, and a natural opinion of another Life after this, in which they might enjoy the delight and satisfaction of the Fame which they had purchased, nothing could have been more vain and unreasonable. If there were no hopes of a Life beyond this, what is there in Fame that should tempt any Man to forgo this present Life, with all the Contentments and Enjoyments of it? What is the pleasure of being well spoken of, when a Man is not? What is the Happiness which Men can promise to themselves, when they are out of Being, when they can enjoy nothing, nor be sensible of any thing, because they are not? So that the Spring of all those brave and gallant Actions, which the Heathens did with the hazard of their Lives, out of a desire of after-Fame and Glory; I say, the Spring of all those Actions, could be no other than the hopes of another Life after this, in which they made account to enjoy the pleasure of the Fame, which they purchased with the expence and loss of this present Life.

But

But this ardent desire and impatient thirst after Fame, concerns but a few of Mankind in comparison. I shall therefore instance in something which is more common and general to Mankind, which plainly argues this hope of Immortality. What is the ground of that Peace, and Quiet, and Satisfaction, which good Men find in good and virtuous Actions, but that they have a secret perswasion and comfortable hopes that they shall some time or other be rewarded? And we find that they maintain these even when they despair of any reward in this World. Now what do these hopes argue, but a secret belief of a future state, and another Life after this, wherein Men shall receive the Reward of their Actions, and inherit the fruit of their doings? Whence is it else, that Good Men, tho they find that goodness suffers, and is persecuted in this World, and that the best designs are many times unsuccessful; what is it that bears them up under these disappointments, and makes them constant in a virtuous course, but this hope of another Life, in a better state of things here-
after?

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after? They have some secret presage in their own minds of a Life after Death, which will be a time of recompence, as this is of Tryal.

2. The same may be argued from the natural Fears of Men. Whence is the secret shame, and fear, and horror, which seizeth upon the minds of Men, when they are about a wicked Action; yea, tho no Eye see them, and tho what they are doing do not fall under the cognizance of any human Court or Tribunal? Whence is it that they meet with such checks and rebukes in their own Spirits, and feel such a disturbance and confusion in their minds, when they do a vile and unworthy thing; yea, altho it be so secretly contrived and so privately managed, that no Man can charge them with it, or call them to account for it? What art thou afraid of, Man, if there be no Life after this? Why do thy Joints tremble, and thy Knees knock together, if thou be'st in no danger from any thing in this World, and hast no fears of the other? If Men had not a natural dread of another World, and sad and dreadful presages of future vengeance

vengeance, why do not Men sin with assurance, when no Eye sees them? Why are not Men secure, when they have only imagined a mischief privately in their own Hearts, and no Creature is privy and conscious to it? Why do Mens own Consciences lash and sting them for these things, which they might do with as great impunity from Men in this World, as the most virtuous Actions? Whence is it that *cogitare, peccare est*, as *Min. Felix* expresseth it, & *non solum conscios timet, sed & conscientiam*? Whence is it that a wicked Man is guilty upon account meerly of his thoughts, and is not only fearful because of those things which others are conscious of, but because of those things which no body knows but his own Conscience? Whence is it, that,

*Scelus intra se tacitum qui cogitat ullum,
Facti crimen habet,*

That he that does but imagine and devise secret mischief in his heart is guilty to himself, as if the fact had been committed; and when no Man can charge and accuse him for it, yet,

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Nocte dieque suum gestat in pectore testem,

He carries his Accuser in his breast, who does night and day incessantly witness against him?

And that these Fears are natural, the sudden rise of them is a good Evidence. They do not proceed from deliberation, Men do not reason themselves into these fears, but they spring up in Mens minds they know not how; which shews that they are natural. Now a Man's natural Actions, I mean such as surprize us, and do not proceed from deliberation, are better Arguments of the intimate sense of our minds, and do more truly discover the bottom of our Hearts, and those Notions that are implanted in our Natures, than those Actions which are governed by reason and discourse, and proceed from deliberation. To demonstrate this by an instance; If a Man upon a sudden sight of a Snake, do recoil and start back, tremble and grow pale; this is a better Argument of a natural antipathy and fear, than it is of a natural courage, if afterward,
when

when he hath commanded down his Fear, he should by his reason persuade himself to take up the Snake into his hand. If you would know what a Man's natural apprehensions are, take him on the sudden, and give him no time to deliberate. Therefore some cunning Politicians have used this way of surprise and sudden questions, to dive into the Hearts of Men, and discover their Secrets.

In like manner, if we would know what Mens natural Apprehensions are concerning the Immortality of the Soul, and a future state, observe what Mens first Thoughts are, whether a Man's Conscience does not suggest to him such Fears upon the commission of sin. There's no doubt but Men may offer violence to their Natures, and reason themselves into great doubts about the Soul's Immortality; nay, Men may be bribed into the contrary opinion: But this Man who in his deliberate Discourses denies any Rewards after this Life, shall by his natural Actions acknowledg them, by those Fears and Terrors, which his guilty Conscience is ever and anon surpris'd withal.

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The Sum of this Argument is, That it is natural for Men that live piously and virtuously, that do just and honest and worthy Actions, to conceive good hopes that it shall some time or other be well with them; that however they may meet with no reward and recompence in this World, yet *verily there will be a Reward for the Righteous*: and on the other hand, wicked Men, tho they flourish and prosper in their wickedness, yet they are not free from guilt, they are fearful and timorous, even when their condition sets them above the fear of any Man upon Earth. Now what doth this signify, but that they have some secret presages of an after-punishment? Nature suggests this thought to them, that there will be a time when all the Sins which they have committed, and the Wickedness which they have done, shall be accounted for.

And 'tis no prejudice to this Truth, that some Men sin against their Consciences, and by frequent acts of Sin, and offering notorious violence to their own light, bring themselves in-
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to a brawny and insensible condition, so that they have not those stings and lashes, are not haunted with those fears and terrors which pursue common Sinners. This is but reasonable to be expected, that Men by frequent acts of Sin, should lose the tender sense which Mens Consciences naturally have of Good and Evil; that Men that lay waste their Consciences by gross and notorious Sins, should lose the sense of Good and Evil, and that their Consciences should grow hard like the beaten road; nay, it is sutable to the Justice of God, to give up such Persons to a reprobate sense, to an injudicious Mind, that they who would not be awakened and reclaimed by the natural Fear of Divine Justice, which God hath hid in every Man's Conscience, should at last lose all sense and apprehension of these things, and be permitted securely and without Remorse to perfect their own ruin.

IV. This Doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul, does evidently tend to the Happiness and Perfection of Man, and to the good Order and Government

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vernment of the World; to the Happiness and Perfection of Man, both considered singly, and in Society.

1. To the Happiness and Perfection of Man considered in his single capacity. If it be a thing desirable *to be* at all, then it is a thing desirable to be continued in *being* as long as may be, and for ever if it be possible. If Life be a Perfection, then eternal Life is much more so; especially if the circumstances of this present Life be consider'd, together with the state which we hope for hereafter. The condition of Men in this present Life, is attended with so many Frailties, liable to so great Miseries and Sufferings, to so many Pains and Diseases, to such various Causes of Sorrow and Trouble, of Fear and Vexation, by reason of the many hazards and uncertainties, which not only the Comforts and Contentments of our Lives, but even Life it self is liable to, that the Pleasure and Happiness of it is by these very much rebated; so that were not Men trained on with the hopes of something better hereafter, Life it self would to many Men an insupportable burden; if

if Men were not supported and born up under the anxieties of this present Life, with the hopes and expectations of a happier state in another World, Mankind would be the most imperfect and unhappy part of God's Creation. For altho other Creatures be subjected to a great deal of vanity and misery, yet they have this Happiness, that as they are made for a short duration and continuance, so they are only affected with the present, they do not fret and discontent themselves about the future, they are not liable to be cheated with hopes, nor tormented with fears, nor vext at disappointments, as the Sons of Men are.

But if our Souls be Immortal, this makes abundant amends and compensation for the Frailties of this Life, and all the transitory sufferings and inconveniences of this present state; human Nature, considered with this Advantage, is infinitely above *the brute Beasts that perish.*

As for those Torments and Miseries which we are liable to in another World, far greater than any thing that

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Men suffer in this life, this ought not in reason to be objected against the Immortality of the Soul, as if this Doctrine did not tend to the Happiness and Perfection of Man: for if this be truly the case of Mankind, that God hath made Mens Souls of an Immortal Nature, and design'd them for a perpetual duration and continuance in another state after this life, in order to which state, he hath placed every Man in this World, to be as it were a Candidate for Eternity, he hath furnish'd every Man with such Helps and Advantages, such Opportunities and Means for the attaining of everlasting Happiness, that if he be not grossly wanting to himself, he shall not miscarry; if this be the case, then an Immortal Nature is a real and mighty Privilege. If God put every Man into a capacity of Happiness, and if no Man becomes miserable but by his own choice, if no Man falls short of eternal Happiness but by his own fault, then Immortality is a Privilege in it self, and a Curse to none but those who make it so to themselves.

2. This Doctrine tends to the Happiness

pineness of Man considered in Society, to the good Order and Government of the World. I do not deny, but if this Principle of the Immortality of the Soul were not believed in the World, if the generality of Mankind had no regard to any thing beyond this present Life; I say, I do not deny notwithstanding this, but there would be some kind of Government kept up in the World; the Necessities of human Nature, and the Mischiefs of contention would compel Men to some kind of Order: but I say withal, that if this Principle were banish'd out of the World, Government would want its most firm Basis and Foundation; there would be infinitely more disorders in the World, were Men not restrained from Injustice and Violence by Principles of Conscience, and the awe of another World. And that this is so, is evident from hence, that all Magistrates think themselves concern'd to cherish Religion, and to maintain in the minds of Men the belief of a God, and of a future state.

This is the *fourth* Argument, That this Doctrine does evidently tend to

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the Happiness of Man, and the good Order and Government of the World. I grant, that this Argument alone, and taken singly by it self, is far from enforcing and necessarily concluding the Soul's Immortality: but if the other Arguments be of force to conclude, this added to them is a very proper inducement to perswade and incline Men to the belief of this Principle; it does very well serve the purpose for which I bring it, namely, to shew that if there be good Arguments for it, no Man hath reason to be averse or backward to the belief of it; if by other Arguments we be convinced of the suitableness of this Principle to Reason, this Consideration will satisfy us, that it is not against our interest to entertain it. And no Man that is not resolved to live wickedly, hath reason to desire that the contrary should be true. For what would a Man gain by it, if the Soul were not Immortal, but to level himself with *the Beasts that perish*, and to put himself into a worse and more miserable condition than any of the Creatures below him?

SERMON III.

Of the Immortality of the Soul, as
discover'd by Nature, and by
Revelation.

The Third Sermon on this Text.

2 TIM. I. 10.

*But is now made manifest by the appearing
of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath
abolished Death, and hath brought
Life and Immortality to light, through
the Gospel.*

THE Vth and last Argument is,
That this Supposition of the
Soul's Immortality, gives the fairest ac-
count and easiest solution of the Phæ-
nomena of human Nature, of those se-
veral

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veral Actions and Operations which we are conscious to our selves of, and which, without great violence to our Reason, cannot be resolved into a bodily Principle, and ascribed to meer Matter; such are Perception, Memory, Liberty, and the several Acts of Understanding and Reason. These Operations we find in our selves, and we cannot imagine how they should be performed by meer Matter; therefore we ought in all reason to resolve them into some Principle of another nature from Matter, that is, into something that is immaterial, and consequently Immortal, that is, incapable in its own Nature of Corruption and Dissolution.

And that the force of this Argument may the better appear, I shall speak something of these distinctly, and shew that none of these Operations can be performed from meer Matter. I begin with the

1. And lowest, which is sensitive Perception, which is nothing else but a consciousness to our selves of our own
sensa:

sensations, an Apprehension of the Impressions which are made upon us; and this Faculty is that which constitutes the difference between Sensitive and Insensitive Creatures. A Stone may have several Impressions made upon it, as well as the living Creature endowed with sense: but with this difference, that whatever Impressions are made upon a Stone, by knocking, cutting, or any other kind of Motion or Action, the Stone is stupid, and is not in the least conscious of any of those Impressions, does not perceive what is done to it; whereas those Creatures which are endowed with sense, do plainly perceive their own and others Motions, they are affected with the Impressions which are made upon them.

Now we can give no account of this Operation from meer Matter. It is plain, that Matter is not in its own Nature sensible: for we find the greatest part of the World to consist of insensible parts, and such as have no Perception. Now if Matter be granted in it self to be insensible, it is utterly unimaginable, how any Motion or Configuration
of

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of the parts of it, should raise that which hath no sense to a Faculty of Perception. *Epicurus* fancied those Particles of Matter, of which Souls were framed, to be the finest and smallest; and for their smoother and easier Motion, that they were all of a round Figure. But supposing Matter not to be naturally and of it self sensible, who can conceive what that is which should awaken the drowsie parts of it, to a lively sense of the Impressions made upon it? It is every whit as easie to imagine how an Instrument might be framed and tuned so artificially, as to hear its own sounds, and to be marvellously delighted with them; or that a Glass might be polish'd to that fineness, as to see all those Objects which are reflected upon it.

But there is one difficulty in this: for it may be said, if Sensitive Perception be an Argument of the Soul's Immateriality, and consequently Immortality, then the Souls of Beasts will be Immortal, as well as the Souls of Men. For answer to this, I shall say these things.

(1.) That

(1.) That the most general and common Philosophy of the World, hath always acknowledged something in Beasts besides their Bodies, and that the Faculty of Sense and Perception which is in them, is founded in a Principle of a higher Nature than Matter. And as this was always the common Philosophy of the World, so we find it to be a supposition of Scripture, which frequently attributes Souls to Beasts as well as to Men, tho of a much inferior Nature. And therefore those particular Philosophers, who have denied any immaterial Principle, or a Soul to Beasts, have also denyed them to have sense, any more than a Clock, or Watch, or any other Engine; and have imagined them to be nothing else but a finer and more complicated kind of Engines, which by reason of the curiosity and tenderness of their Frame, are more easily susceptible of all kind of motions and impressions from without, which Impressions are the Cause of all those Actions, that resemble those sensations which we Men find in our selves; which is to say, that Birds, and Beasts, and Fishes, are
nothing

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nothing else but a more curious sort of Puppets, which by certain secret and hidden Weights and Springs do move up and down, and counterfeit the Actions of Life and Sense. This I confess seems to me to be an odd kind of Philosophy; and it hath this vehement prejudice against it, that if this were true, every Man would have great cause to question the reality of his own Perceptions: for to all appearance the Sensations of Beasts are as real as ours, and in many things their Senses much more exquisite than ours; and if nothing can be a sufficient Argument to a Man, that he is really endowed with Sense, besides his own consciousness of it, then every Man hath reason to doubt whether all Men in the World besides himself be not meer Engines; for no Man hath any other Evidence, that another Man is really endowed with Sense, than he hath that Brute Creatures are so; for they appear to us to see, and hear, and feel, and smell, and taste things as truly and as exactly as any Man in the World does.

(2.) Supposing Beasts to have an Immaterial Principle distinct from their Body,

Body, it will not from hence follow, that they are Immortal, in the sense that we attribute Immortality to Men. For Immortality, when we ascribe it to Men, signifies two things.

1. That the Soul remains after the Body, and is not corrupted and dissolved together with it.

2. That it lives in this separate state, and is sensible of Happiness or Misery.

1. Immortality imports that the Soul remains after the Body, and is not corrupted or dissolved together with it. And there is no inconvenience in attributing this sort of Immortality to the Brute Creatures. And here it is not necessary for us, who know so little of the ways and works of God, and of the secrets of Nature, to be able to give a particular account what becomes of the Souls of Brute Creatures after death; whether they return into the Soul and Spirit of the World, if there be any such thing, as some fancy; or whether they pass into the Bodies of other Animals which succeed

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succeed in their rooms; I say, this is not necessary to be particularly determined; it is sufficient to lay down this in general as highly probable, that they are such a sort of Spirits, which as to their Operation and Life, do necessarily depend upon Matter, and require Union with it, which Union being dissolved, they lapse into an insensible condition, and a state of inactivity. For being endowed only with a Sensitive Principle, the Operations of which do plainly depend upon an Organical disposition of the Body, when the Body is dissolved, all their activity ceaseth; and when this visible Frame of the World shall be dissolved, and this Scene of sensible things shall pass away, then it is not improbable that they shall be discharged out of Being, and return to their first nothing: for tho in their own Nature they would continue longer, yet having served the End of their Being, and done their Work, it is not unsuitable to the same Wisdom that made them, and commanded them into Being, to let them sink into their first state.

2^{ly}. Immortality, as applied to the Spirits of Men, imports that their Souls are not only capable of continuing, but living in this separate state, so as to be sensible of Happiness and Misery. For the Soul of Man being of an higher Nature, and not only endowed with a Faculty of Sense, but likewise other Faculties which have no necessary dependance upon, or connexion with Matter; having a sense of God, and of Divine and Spiritual things, and being capable of Happiness in the Enjoyment of God, or of Misery in a separation from him; it is but reasonable to imagine, that the Souls of Men shall be admitted to the exercise of these Faculties, and the Enjoyment of that Life which they are capable of in a separate state. And this is that which constitutes that vast and wide difference between the Souls of Men and Beasts: and this degree of Immortality is as much above the other, as Reason and Religion are above Sense.

2. Another Faculty in us, which argues an Immaterial, and consequently an Immortal Principle in Man, is
G Memory;

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Memory ; and this likewise is common in some degree to several of the Brute Creatures, and it seems to be nothing else but a kind of continued Sensation of things. And of this we can give no account from meer Matter. For if that which we call the Soul, were nothing else but, as *Epicurus* imagined, a little Wild-fire, a company of small round Particles of Matter in perpetual motion, it being a fluid thing, it would be liable to a continual dissipation of its parts, and the new parts that come, would be altogether strangers to the Impressions made upon the old ; so that supposing the Soul liable but to those changes which the grosser parts of our Bodies, our flesh and blood, continually are liable to, by the evaporation and spending of the old, and an accession of new Matter ; (and if we suppose the Soul to be fluid Matter, that is, consisting of Particles, which are by no kind of connexion link'd to one another, it will in all probability be more easily dissipable, than the grosser parts of the Body, and) if so, how is it imaginable that these new and foreign Particles should retain any sense of the Impressions made upon

upon those which are gone many years ago.

Serm. 3.

3. Another Faculty which I shall instance in, is the Will of Man, which is endowed with Liberty and Freedom, and gives a Man Dominion over his own Actions. Matter moves by necessary and certain Laws, and cannot move if it be at rest, unless it be moved by another; and cannot rest, that is, cannot but move, if it be impel'd by another. Whence then are voluntary motions? Whence is the ἀντεξέσσιον, the arbitrary Principle which we find in our selves, the freedom of Action to do or not to do, to do this or that, which we are intimately conscious to our selves of? Of all the Operations of our Minds, it is the hardest to give an account of Liberty from meer Matter. This *Epicurus* was sensible of, and infinitely puzzled with it, as we may see by the Question which *Lucretius* puts,

Unde est hac inquam fatis avulsa voluntas?

How comes the Soul of Man to have this peculiar

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peculiar privilege of freedom and liberty, above all other sorts of Matter that are in the World? Whence is it, that when all things else move by a fatal necessity, the Soul of Man should be exempted from that slavery? He does indeed attempt to give an account of it from a motion of Declination which is proper and peculiar to the Particles of the Soul: but that is a more unintelligible Riddle than Liberty it self. The

4. And last Operation I shall instance in, is that of Reason and Understanding. Not to mention the activity and nimbleness of our Thoughts, in the abstracted notions of our Minds, the multitude of distinct Ideas and Notions which dwell together in our Souls, none of which are accountable from Matter, I shall only instance in *two* particulars.

(1.) Those acts of Reason and Judgment whereby we over-rule the reports of our Senses, and correct the errors and deceptions of them.

(2.). The Contemplation of Spiritual and Divine Things.

(1.)

(1.) Those acts of Reason and Judgment whereby we over-rule the reports and determinations of Sense. Our Sense tells us, that things at a distance are less, than our Reason tells us they are really in themselves; as that the Body of the Sun is but about a Foot Diameter: but our Reason informs us otherwise. Now what is the Principle that controuls our Senses, and corrects the deception of them? If the Soul of Man be meer Matter, it can only judg of things according to the Impressions which are made upon our Senses: but we do judg otherwise, and see reason to do so many times. Therefore it must be some higher Principle which judges of things, not by the material Impressions which they make upon our Senses, but by other measures. And therefore to avoid this inconvenience, *Epicurus* was glad, to fly the absurdity, to affirm that all things really are what they appear to us, and that in truth the Sun is no bigger than it seems to be.

(2.) The contemplation of things Spiritual and Divine, is an Argument
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that

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that the Soul is of a higher Original than any thing that is material. To contemplate the Nature of God, and the Divine Excellencies and Perfections; the meditation of a future State, and of the Happiness of another World; those breathings which good Men feel in their Souls after God, and the enjoyment of him, argue the Spiritual nature of the Soul. *Hoc habet argumentum divinitatis suæ* (saith Seneca) *quod eam divina delectant, nec ut alienis interest sed ut suis.* The Soul of Man hath this Argument of its Divine Original, that it is so strangely delighted, so infinitely pleased and satisfied with the Contemplation of Divine things, and is taken up with these thoughts, as if they were its proper business and concernment. Those strong inclinations and desires after Immortality, and the pleasure which good Men find in the fore-thoughts of the Happiness which they hope to enter into, when their Souls shall quit these Mansions; the restless aspirings of our Souls toward God, and those blessed Mansions where he dwells, and where the Spirits of good Men converse with him and one another, these signify our Souls to be of a nobler extraction

traction than the Earth, that they are descended from above, and that Heaven is there Country, their thoughts are so much upon it, and they are so desirous to return to it.

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Serm 3.

I shall conclude this Argument from the noble and excellent Operations of our Souls, of which we are conscious, to our selves, with a Passage of Tully to this purpose. *Animarum nulla in terris origo inveniri potest: nihil enim est in animis mixtum atque concretum aut quod ex terrâ natum atque fictum esse videatur.* The Souls of Men have not their Original from the Earth, it is in vain to seek for it there: for there is nothing in the mind of Man of a material mixture and composition, which we can imagine to be born or formed out of the Earth. For, says he, among material and earthly things there is nothing, quod vim memoriae, mentis, cogitationis habeat, quod & præterita teneat, & futura provideat, & complecti possit præsentia. There's no earthly thing which hath the power of Memory, of Understanding, of Thought, which retains things past, foresees and provides for things future, comprehends and considers things present. Singularis est igitur quædam natura

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tura atque vis animi, sejuncta ab his usitatis notisque naturis ; so that the Nature and Power of the Soul are of a peculiar and singular kind, different from all those natures which we are acquainted with in this World. He concludes, Itaque quicquid est quod sentit, quod sapit, quod vult, quod viget, celeste & divinum est, ob eamque rem æternum sit necesse est. Therefore whatever that is which is endowed with a power of Perception, with Wisdom, with Liberty, with so much Vigour and Activity as the Soul of Man, is of Heavenly and Divine Original, and for that reason is necessarily Immortal, and to continue for ever.

Thus I have represented to you as briefly and plainly as I could, those which I account the chief and strongest Arguments of this great Principle of Religion, the Soul's Immortality. Some of them are plain and obvious to every Capacity ; the rest, tho they be above common Capacities, yet were not to be neglected, because they may be useful to some, tho not to all ; and as those who are more wise and knowing should have patience, whilst the most common and plainest things are spoken

spoken for the instruction of ordinary Capacities, so those of lower Capacities should be content that many things should be spoken which may be useful to others, tho they be above their reach.

Serm. 3.

To sum up then what has been said from Reason, for the proof of the Soul's Immortality. It is a natural Dictate and Notion of our Minds, universally entertained in all Ages and places of the World, excepting some very few Persons and Sects; it doth not contradict any other Principle that Nature hath planted in us, but doth very well agree with those other Notions which are most natural; it is most sutable to the natural Hopes and Fears of Men; it evidently tends to the Happiness and Perfection of Man, and to the good Order and Government of the World; lastly, it gives the fairest account of the Phænomena of human Nature, of those several Actions and Operations which we are conscious to our selves of.

Now supposing the Soul were Immortal, what greater rational Evidence
than

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than this can we expect for it? How can we without a Revelation have more assurance of the things of this Nature, than these Arguments give us, not taken singly, but as they concur together to make up an entire Argument, and to give us sufficient Evidence of this?

I do not say that these Arguments do so necessarily conclude it, that there is an absolute impossibility the thing should be otherwise: but so as to render it sufficiently certain to a prudent and considerate Man, and one that is willing to accept of reasonable Evidence. For the generality of the Papists do pertinaciously maintain this unreasonable Principle, that there can be no certainty of any thing without Infallibility: yet some of the wiser of them have thought better of it, and are pleased to state the business of certainty otherwise; particularly *Melchior Canus*, one of the most Learned of their Writers determines those things to be sufficiently certain, which no Man can without imprudence and obstinacy disbelieve. *Certa apud homines ea sunt quae negari sine pervicaciâ & stultitiâ non possunt.*

possunt. Men esteem those things certain, which no Man that is not unreasonably obstinate and imprudent can deny. And I think the Arguments I have brought for the Soul's Immortality, are such as no Man that is unprejudiced and hath a prudent regard to his own Interest can resist.

Serm. 3.

Thus I have done with the *First* thing I propounded to do for the proof of the Soul's Immortality, which was to shew what Evidence of Reason there is for it. I shall speak briefly to the

Second Thing I propounded, which was to shew how little can be said against it, because this will indirectly give a strength and force to the Arguments I have brought for it. For it is very considerable in any Question or Controversie, what strength there is in the Arguments on both sides: for tho very plausible Arguments may be brought for a thing, yet if others as plausible and specious may be urged against it, this leaves the thing *in equilibrio*, it sets the ballance even, and inclines the judgment neither way; nay, if the Objections against a thing be
confide-

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considerable, tho not so strong as the Arguments for it, the considerableness of the Objections does so far weaken the contrary Arguments: but where the Arguments on one hand are strong, and the Objections on the contrary very slight, and such as may easily be answered, the weakness of the Objections contributes to the strength of the Argument for the other side of the Question.

To come then to the business, I know but *three* Objections which have any colour against this Principle.

I. That the Notion of a Spirit, or an Immaterial Substance, does imply a Contradiction.

Answ. 1. This is only boldly said, and not the least colour of proof offer'd for it by the Author that asserts it. This Objection had indeed been considerable, if it had been made out as clearly, as it is confidently affirmed. In the mean time I think we may take leave to deny, that the Notion of a Spirit hath any repugnancy in it, till some body think fit to prove it.

2. I

2. I told you that this Question about the Soul's Immortality, supposeth the Existence of God to be already proved; and if there be a God, and it be an essential property of the Divine Nature, that he is a Spirit, then there is such a thing as a Spirit and Immaterial Substance, and consequently the Notion of a Spirit hath no Contradiction in it; for if it had, there could be no such thing.

II. It is said, that there is no express Text for the Soul's Immortality in the Old Testament.

Ans. This doth not properly belong to the intrinsecal Arguments and Reason of the thing, but is matter of Revelation. And this I shall fully speak to, when I come to shew what Evidence the Jews had for the Soul's Immortality. In the mean time this may be a sufficient answer to this Objection, that there is no absolute necessity why it should be expressly revealed in the Old Testament, if it be, as I have shewn, a natural Notion of our Minds: for the Scripture supposeth
us

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us to be Men, and to have an antecedent Notion of those Truths which are implanted in our Nature, and therefore chiefly designs to teach us the way to that eternal Happiness which we have a natural Notion and hope of. The

III. Objection is from the near and intimate Sympathy which is between the Soul and the Body, which appears in the vigor and strength of our Faculties; as Understanding and Memory do very much depend upon the temper and disposition of the Body, and do usually decay and decline with it.

Answ. The utmost that this Objection signifies, is, that there is an intimate Union and Conjunction between the Soul and Body, which is the cause of the Sympathy which we find to be between them: but it does by no means prove, that they are one and the same Essence. Now that there is such an intimate union and connexion between the Soul and Matter in all Creatures endowed with Life and Sense, is acknowledged by all who affirm the Immateriality of Souls; tho the manner of this Union be altogether unknown

to us; and supposing such an Union, it is but reasonable to imagine that there should be such a Sympathy, that the Body should be affected with the delights and disturbances of the Mind, and that the Soul should also take part in the pleasures and pains of the Body, that by this means it may be effectually excited and stir'd up to provide for the supply of our bodily wants and necessities: and from this Sympathy, it is easie to give account how it comes to pass, that our Faculties of Understanding, and Memory, and Imagination, are more or less vigorous, according to the good or bad temper and disposition of our Bodies. For by the same reason that the Mind may be grieved and afflicted at the Pains and Sufferings of the Body, it may likewise be disordered and weakned in its Operations by the distempers of the Body. So that this Objection only proves the Soul to be united to the Body; but not to be the same thing with it.

S E R-

The following is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various positions in the Department of Education, for the year ending June 30, 1908.

For the position of Superintendent of Schools, Mr. J. H. Smith has been appointed.

For the position of Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Mr. W. B. Jones has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Normal Schools, Mr. C. D. Brown has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Technical Schools, Mr. E. F. Green has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Agricultural Schools, Mr. G. H. White has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Commercial Schools, Mr. I. J. Black has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Manual Training Schools, Mr. K. L. Gray has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Music Schools, Mr. M. N. Hall has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Art Schools, Mr. O. P. King has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Physical Education Schools, Mr. Q. R. Lee has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Social Science Schools, Mr. S. T. Young has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Languages Schools, Mr. U. V. Adams has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Mathematics Schools, Mr. X. Y. Baker has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Natural Sciences Schools, Mr. Z. A. Clark has been appointed.

For the position of Director of History Schools, Mr. B. C. Evans has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Geography Schools, Mr. D. E. Foster has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Civics Schools, Mr. F. G. Hill has been appointed.

For the position of Director of English Schools, Mr. H. I. Jackson has been appointed.

For the position of Director of French Schools, Mr. J. K. Lewis has been appointed.

For the position of Director of German Schools, Mr. L. M. Miller has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Italian Schools, Mr. N. O. Nelson has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Spanish Schools, Mr. P. Q. Phillips has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Latin Schools, Mr. R. S. Reed has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Greek Schools, Mr. T. U. Scott has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Hebrew Schools, Mr. V. W. Taylor has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Sanskrit Schools, Mr. X. Y. Thomas has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Chinese Schools, Mr. Z. A. Turner has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Japanese Schools, Mr. B. C. Walker has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Korean Schools, Mr. D. E. Wright has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Indian Schools, Mr. F. G. Lopez has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Hawaiian Schools, Mr. H. I. Gomez has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Philippine Schools, Mr. J. K. Martinez has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Cuban Schools, Mr. L. M. Hernandez has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Puerto Rican Schools, Mr. N. O. Sanchez has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Mexican Schools, Mr. P. Q. Ramirez has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Central American Schools, Mr. R. S. Flores has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Caribbean Schools, Mr. T. U. Reyes has been appointed.

For the position of Director of South American Schools, Mr. V. W. Torres has been appointed.

For the position of Director of African Schools, Mr. X. Y. Ortiz has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Asian Schools, Mr. Z. A. Vargas has been appointed.

For the position of Director of European Schools, Mr. B. C. Gutierrez has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Oceanic Schools, Mr. D. E. Kim has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Arctic Schools, Mr. F. G. Peterson has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Antarctic Schools, Mr. H. I. Ross has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Polar Regions Schools, Mr. J. K. Thompson has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Subarctic Schools, Mr. L. M. Whitehead has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Subantarctic Schools, Mr. N. O. Long has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Tropical Regions Schools, Mr. P. Q. Schmidt has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Subtropical Regions Schools, Mr. R. S. Fisher has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Temperate Regions Schools, Mr. T. U. Grant has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Cold Regions Schools, Mr. V. W. Steward has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Warm Regions Schools, Mr. X. Y. Morris has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Hot Regions Schools, Mr. Z. A. Cook has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Very Hot Regions Schools, Mr. B. C. Bell has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Extremely Hot Regions Schools, Mr. D. E. Ward has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Superheated Regions Schools, Mr. F. G. Brooks has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Hypocenters Schools, Mr. H. I. Butler has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Volcanoes Schools, Mr. J. K. Cannon has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Earthquakes Schools, Mr. L. M. Drake has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Storms Schools, Mr. N. O. Evans has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Hurricanes Schools, Mr. P. Q. Fisher has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Typhoons Schools, Mr. R. S. Grant has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Cyclones Schools, Mr. T. U. Harris has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Monsoons Schools, Mr. V. W. Jenkins has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Trade Winds Schools, Mr. X. Y. Kelly has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Prevailing Winds Schools, Mr. Z. A. Lester has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Local Winds Schools, Mr. B. C. Mason has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Sea Breezes Schools, Mr. D. E. Myers has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Land Breezes Schools, Mr. F. G. Nichols has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Mountain Winds Schools, Mr. H. I. Olsen has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Valley Winds Schools, Mr. J. K. Parker has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Coastal Winds Schools, Mr. L. M. Quinn has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Inland Winds Schools, Mr. N. O. Roberts has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Desert Winds Schools, Mr. P. Q. Russell has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Forest Winds Schools, Mr. R. S. Sanders has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Urban Winds Schools, Mr. T. U. Stone has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Rural Winds Schools, Mr. V. W. Taylor has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Suburban Winds Schools, Mr. X. Y. Thomas has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Semi-urban Winds Schools, Mr. Z. A. Turner has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Peri-urban Winds Schools, Mr. B. C. Walker has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Extra-urban Winds Schools, Mr. D. E. Wright has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Super-urban Winds Schools, Mr. F. G. Lopez has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Hyper-urban Winds Schools, Mr. H. I. Gomez has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Mega-urban Winds Schools, Mr. J. K. Martinez has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Giga-urban Winds Schools, Mr. L. M. Hernandez has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Tera-urban Winds Schools, Mr. N. O. Sanchez has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Peta-urban Winds Schools, Mr. P. Q. Ramirez has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Exa-urban Winds Schools, Mr. R. S. Flores has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Zetta-urban Winds Schools, Mr. T. U. Reyes has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Yotta-urban Winds Schools, Mr. V. W. Torres has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Septia-urban Winds Schools, Mr. X. Y. Ortiz has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Octia-urban Winds Schools, Mr. Z. A. Vargas has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Centia-urban Winds Schools, Mr. B. C. Gutierrez has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Decia-urban Winds Schools, Mr. D. E. Kim has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Hectia-urban Winds Schools, Mr. F. G. Peterson has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Kilo-urban Winds Schools, Mr. H. I. Ross has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Myria-urban Winds Schools, Mr. J. K. Thompson has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Stadia-urban Winds Schools, Mr. L. M. Whitehead has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Topia-urban Winds Schools, Mr. N. O. Long has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Megastadia-urban Winds Schools, Mr. P. Q. Schmidt has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Giga-topia-urban Winds Schools, Mr. R. S. Fisher has been appointed.

For the position of Director of Tera-topia-urban Winds Schools, Mr. T. U. Grant has been appointed.

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For the position of Director of Topia-topia-topia-topia-urban Winds Schools, Mr. F.

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SERMON IV.

Of the Immortality of the Soul,
as discover'd by Nature, and
by Revelation.

The Fourth Sermon on this Text.

2 T I M. I. 10.

But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light, through the Gospel.

HAVING in my three former Discourses shewed, what Arguments natural Reason doth furnish us with, for the Immortality of our Souls, I come now to the *Second* thing I propounded, which is to shew what Assurance

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rance the World had *de facto*, of this great Principle of Religion, the Soul's Immortality, before the Revelation of the Gospel.

Before our Saviour's coming into the World, there were but two different Religions; that of the Heathens, and that of the *Jews*. The Religion of the Heathens was natural Religion, corrupted and degenerated into Idolatry: The Religion of the *Jews* was revealed and instituted by God; but did suppose natural Religion, and was superadded to it. Therefore I shall consider the Heathens and the *Jews* distinctly. And,

First, Shew what assurance the Heathens had of this Principle of the Soul's Immortality.

Secondly, What the *Jews* had of it.

First, What assurance the Heathens had of the Soul's Immortality.

1. It is Evident, that there was a general Inclination in Mankind, even after

after its greatest Corruption and Degeneracy, to the belief of this Principle; which appears in that all People and Nations of the World, after they were sunk into the greatest Degeneracy, and all (except only the *Jews*) become Idolaters, did universally agree in this Apprehension, that their Souls did remain after their Bodies, and pass into a state of Happiness or Misery, according as they had demeaned themselves in this life. Not that they did generally reason themselves into this Apprehension, by any convincing Arguments, but did herein follow the bent and tendency of their Natures, which did incline them thus to think. For no other reason can be given of the Universal Consent, even of the most rude and barbarous Nations in this Principle, besides the inclination of human Nature to this Opinion; that is, either men come into the World with this Notion imprinted upon their Minds, or else (which comes all to one) the Understanding of Man is naturally of such a Frame and Make, that left to it self, and the free exercise of its own thoughts, it will fall into this Apprehension.

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2. The unlearned and common People among the Heathen, seem to have had the truest and least wavering Apprehensions in this matter; the Reason of which seems to be plain, because their belief followed the byass and inclination of their Nature, and they had not their natural Notions embroil'd and disorder'd by obscure and uncertain reasonings about it, as the Philosophers had, whose Understandings were perplex'd with infinite Niceties and Objections, which never troubled the heads of the common People. By which means the vulgar had this advantage, that the natural dictates of their Minds had their free course; and as they did not argue themselves into this Principle, so neither were their natural Hopes and Fears check'd and controll'd by any Objections to the contrary.

But then, this Principle being only a kind of natural Instinct in them, which did not awaken their Minds by any deep consideration and reasoning about it, it had no great influence on their Lives. For as they were not much troubled

troubled with doubts concerning it, so neither did they deeply attend to the consequences of it : but as they followed the inclination of Nature in the entertaining of this Notion, so because it was not entertained upon deep consideration, it had no great effect upon them.

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3. The Learned among the Heathen did not so generally agree in this Principle, and those who did consent in it, were many of them more wavering and unsettled than the common People. *Epicurus* and his followers were peremptory in the denial of it : but by their own acknowledgment, they did herein offer great violence to their Natures, and had much ado to develt themselves of the contrary Apprehensions and Fears. Therefore the Poet, in the Person of the *Epicurean*, represents it as a rare piece of Happiness, and that which few attained to, to quit themselves of the Notions of another state after this Life.

*Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas,
Atque metus omnes & inexorabile fatum*

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*Subjecit pedibus, strepitumque Acherontis
avari.*

The Stoicks were very inclinable to the belief of a future state; but yet they almost every where speak very doubtfully of it. *Seneca* and *Antoninus* often speak to this purpose, That if the Soul remain after this life, there's no doubt but that good men shall be happy, and bad men miserable; but whether the Soul out-live the Body or not, that they could not positively determine. *Aristotle* hath some express passages for the Soul's Immortality; but it seems he was not constant to himself in this Matter, or else they have done him a great deal of wrong, who have wrote so many Books on both sides, concerning his Opinion in this point. *Pythagoras*, and *Socrates*, and *Plato*, and many others of the most eminent Philosophers, as *Tully* tells us, were full, not of assurance, but of very good hopes of the Soul's Immortality and a future state. *Socrates*, who was one of the best and wisest of all the Heathens, does in his Discourses before his Death, (as *Plato* relates them) support and bear up him-
self

self against the terrors of Death, only with this Consideration, That he was full of hopes that when he left this World, he should pass into a far happier and more perfect state; that he should go to God and live with him, and keep company with the Spirits of good men: And that he is not positive and peremptory in it, is no Argument that he doubted of this more than any thing else; for that was his fashion in all his Discourses, to speak modestly, and with some shew of doubting, even concerning those things whereof he had the greatest assurance: But this is plain, that he was so well assured of it as to die chearfully, and to leave the World without any kind of disturbance, upon the hopes that he had conceived of another life; and surely they must be pretty confident hopes, that will bear up a Man's Spirit to such a height when he comes to die. In short, he told his Friends the morning before he died, that he had as good assurance of the Soul's Immortality as human Reason could give, and that nothing but a Divine Revelation could give him greater satisfaction. And to mention no more, *Tully*, the chief Phi-


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Philosopher among the Romans, expresseth himself with a good degree of confidence in this matter. He argues excellently for it in several parts of his works; but particularly in his Book *de Senectute*, he declares his own opinion of it, where, speaking to *Scipio* and *Laelius*, he says, *I do not see why I may not adventure to declare freely to you, what my thoughts are concerning death; and perhaps I may discern better than others what it is, because I am now by reason of my Age not far from it. I believe, says he, that the Fathers, those eminent Persons and my particular Friends, are still alive, and that they live the life which only deserves the name of life. And afterward, Nec me solum ratio ac disputatio impulit ut ita crederem, sed nobilitas etiam summorum Philosophorum & autoritas; nor has Reason only and Disputation brought me to this belief, but the famous Judgment and Authority of the chief Philosophers. And having mentioned Pythagoras, Socrates, and Plato, he breaks out into this rapture, Oh praeclarum diem quum in illud animorum concilium caetumque proficiscar, & cum ex hac turbâ & colluvione discedam! Oh glorious day, when I shall go unto the*
great

great Council and Assembly of Spirits, when I shall go out of this tumult and confusion, and quit the sink of this World, when I shall be gathered to all those brave Spirits who have left this World, and meet with Cato the greatest and best of Mankind! What could a Christian almost say with more extasie? And he concludes, *Quod si in hoc erro, quod animos hominum immortales esse credam, libenter erro, nec mihi hunc errorem quo delector, dum vivo, extorqueri volo: sin mortuus, ut quidam minuti Philosophi censent nihil sentiam, non vereor ne hunc errorem meum mortui Philosophi irrideant.* But if after all I am mistaken herein, I am pleas'd with my error, which I would not willingly part with whilst I live: and if after my death (as some little Philosophers suppose) I shall be depriv'd of all sense, I have no fear of being expos'd and laugh'd at by them, for this my mistake in the other World.

Thus you see what assurance the Heathen had of this Principle, and that there was a general inclination and propension in them to the belief of it; and as it was not firmly and upon good grounds believed among the

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the common People; so neither was it doubted of or call'd in question among them. Among the Philosophers it was a matter of great uncertainty, being stily denyed by some, doubted of by others; and those who were most inclinable to the entertainment of it, do rather express their desires and hope of it, than their full assurance concerning it. I come therefore,

Secondly, To the Enquiry, What assurance the *Jews* had of the Soul's Immortality and a future state? And of this, I shall give you an account in these following particulars.

1. They had all the assurance which natural Light, and the common Reason of Mankind does ordinarily afford men concerning this matter; they had common to them with the Heathen, all the Advantage that Nature gives men to come to the knowledge of this Truth. But that which I chiefly design to enquire into, is, what singular Advantage they had above the Heathen, by means of those special Revelations which were made to them from God. Therefore,

2. They

2. They had by Divine Revelation a fuller assurance of those truths which have a nearer connexion with this Principle, and which do very much tend to facilitate the belief of it ; as namely, concerning the Providence of God, and his interesting himself particularly in the affairs of the World. In the History of *Moses* they had a satisfactory account of the Original of the World, that God made it, and that he had eminently interposed in the Government of it ; and had given several eminent testimonies of his Providence, in the general Deluge which was brought upon the World, and in the dreadful particular Judgment from Heaven upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, and the Neighbouring Cities ; in his special Providence toward *Abraham*, and *Isaac*, and *Jacob* ; in that series of Miracles whereby their deliverance was wrought out of *Egypt*, and they were carried through the Wilderness to the promised Land ; and in those two standing Miracles of the fruitfulness of every sixth Year, because the Land was to rest the seventh ; and preserving the Land from the invasion of Enemies,

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mies, when they came up to *Jerusalem* three times a Year, by which God did testify a very particular and immediate Providence toward them. Now whatever gives assurance of God's Providence, does very much facilitate the belief of a future state. *Epicurus* was well aware of the connexion of these Principles; and therefore in order to the freeing of the minds of men from the fears of a future state, he makes way for it, by removing the Providence of God, and denying that he either made the World, or concerned himself in the Government of it.

And then besides this, the *Jews* had assurance of the existence of Spirits, by the more immediate ministry of Angels among them. And this does directly make way for the belief of an immaterial Principle, and consequently of the Soul's Immortality. And this the *Sadduces*, who were a kind of *Epicureans* among the *Jews*, were sensible of; and therefore as they said that there was *no resurrection* and *no future state after this life*, so they denied that there was either *Angel* or *Spirit*, as the Apostle tells

tells us, *Acts* 23. 7. From whence by the way we may take notice of the great mistake of those, who, from the opinion of the *Sadduces*, argue that Eternal Life was not at all believed under the Old Testament; because if it had been so, it is not credible that it would have been disowned by those who acknowledged the Authority of those Books; whereas we see that they denied, to serve their Hypothesis, other things which were most expressly revealed in the Old Testament, as the Doctrine of Angels and Spirits.

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3. There were some remarkable instances in the Old Testament, which did tend very much to perswade men to this Truth; I mean the instances of *Enoch* and *Elias*, who did not die like other men, but were translated, and taken up into Heaven in an extraordinary manner. From which instances it was obvious to considerate men, to reason, that God did intend by these Examples to encourage good men with the hopes of another state after this life. And accordingly the Apostle to the *Hebrews* makes the belief of future Rewards, a necessary consequence from this

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this instance of *Enoch's Translation*, Heb. 11. 5, 6. By Faith *Enoch was translated, that he should not see death, and was not found, because God had translated him: For before his Translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without Faith it is impossible to please him: For he that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

4. This was typified and shadowed forth to them by the Legal Administrations. The whole œconomy of their Worship and Temple, of their Rites and Ceremonies, and Sabbaths, did shadow out some farther thing to them, tho in a very obscure manner: The Land of *Canaan*, and their coming to the possession of it, after so many Years travel in the Wilderness, did represent that heavenly Inheritance which good men should be possess'd of after the troubles of this life. And these were intended by God to signifie those greater and better things to them, and so understood by those who were more devout and knowing among them; else the Apostle, in his E-

pistle

pistle to the *Hebrews*, had gone upon a very ill ground, when he all along takes it for granted, that the Dispensation of the Law, and all the Ceremonies of it, were of a farther signification, *Heb.* 10. 11. *The Law having a shadow of good things to come.*

Serm. 4.

5. This was in general and by good consequence, tho not obvious to all, yet sufficiently to prudent and discerning men, revealed in the Book of the Law taken precisely; I mean the five Books of *Moses*. It is said of *Abel*, that God was pleased with his Sacrifice, tho with *Cain's* he was not well-pleased, *Gen.* 4. Upon this *Cain* was angry at his Brother, and slew him. Now if the Immortality of the Soul and a future state, be not supposed and taken for granted in this story, this very passage is enough to cut the sinews, and pluck up the Roots of all Religion. For if there were no Rewards after this life, it were obvious for every Man to argue from this story, that it was a dangerous thing to please God; if this were all that *Abel* got by it, to be knock'd on the Head

Vol. 9. Head by his Brother, who offended God.

But I shall chiefly insist on the general Promises, which we find in these Books of *Moses*, of God's blessing good men, and declaring that he was *their God*, even after their Death. Now I shall shew that these Promises did involve the Happiness of another life, and were intended by God to signify thus much, and were so understood by good men under that Dispensation. That these general promises did contain this sense under them, and were intended by God to signify thus much, is evident from our Saviour's citation of that Text, to confute the *Sadduces*, *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*; from whence he reasons thus, *Now God is not the God of the dead, but of the living; for all live to him*: the force of which Argument was directly and immediately level'd against the main Error of the *Sadduces*, which was the denial of a future state. This our Saviour immediately proves from this Text, and by consequence the Resurrection,

rection, which the *Sadduces* did not deny upon any other account, but because they did not * believe a Future state.

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6. Toward the expiration of the Legal Dispensation, there was yet a clearer Revelation of a Future state. The Text in *Daniel* seems to be much plainer than any in the Old Testament, *Dan. 12. 2. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the Earth shall awake; some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.* And to this Text the seven Brethren, who were cruelly put to death under the Persecution of *Antiochus*, seem to refer, when they comfort themselves with the hopes of another Life, *2 Mac. 7. 9.* where one of them, ready to die, says thus to *Antiochus*, *Thou like a fury takest us out of this present life; but the King of the World shall raise us up, who have died for his Laws, unto everlasting Life.* To the same purpose another of them, *v. 14.* when he was tormented, expresseth his Confidence thus, *It is good, being put to death by men, to look for hope from God, to be raised up again by him: but as for thee* (speak-

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ing of *Antiochus*) thou shalt have no Resurrection to life. Where he seems to allude to the twofold Resurrection mention'd by *Daniel*. And tho this History of the *Maccabees* be not Canonical, yet the Apostle hath warranted the Truth of it to us, at least in this particular, for he plainly refers to this story, *Heb. 11. 35. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better Resurrection.*

7. Notwithstanding this, I say, that the Immortality of the Soul, and a future State, was not expressly and clearly revealed in the Old Testament, at least not in *Moses* his Law. The special and particular Promises of that Dispensation, were of temporal good things; and the great Blessing of Eternal Life, was but somewhat obscurely involved and signified in the Types and general Promises: For considering that the particular Promises were plainly of temporal things, it was very obvious to those who were not so prudent and discerning to interpret the general Promises, so as to comprehend only that kind of Blessings, which were express'd in the special and particular Promises,

mises, and so likewise to understand the general Threatnings. And upon this account the Apostle to the *Hebrews*, principally advanceth the New Covenant of the Gospel, above the Old Dispensation; because the Gospel had clear, and expresse, and special Promises of Eternal Life, which the Law had not, *Heb. 8. 6.* But now hath he obtained a more excellent Ministry, by how much also he is the Mediator of a better Covenant, which was establisht upon better Promises. For the same reason Christ is said here in the Text, by his appearance to have abolish'd death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. And so I proceed to the

Second thing I propounded, which is to shew what farther Evidence and Assurance the Gospel gives us of it, than the World had before; what clearer Discoveries we have by Christ's coming, than the Heathens or Jews had before.

That the Gospel hath brought to us a clearer discovery of this than *they* had, is here expressly said; that God's

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gracious Purpose concerning our Salvation, which was, before the World began, decreed to be accomplish'd in Christ, is now made manifest by his coming into the World ; *ver. 9. Who hath saved and call'd us with an holy calling, not according to our Works, but according to his own Purpose and Grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the World began, but is now made manifest, &c.* Which is emphatically spoken, *now*, and not till *now*, importing that before the appearing of our Saviour, it was in great measure hid from the World, and that men had very dark and obscure Apprehensions of it, till it was *brought to light by the Gospel*. And this is not only affirmed in this place, but very frequently all over the New Testament. I will mention some of the most exprefs Places to this purpose. *John 6. 8.* When many of Christ's Followers left him, he asks the Twelve, *Will ye also go away ? To whom Peter answers, Lord, to whom shall we go ? Thou hast the words of eternal life.* As if he had said, What Master should we chuse to follow rather than thee, who bringest to the World the glad tidings of *eternal life* ?

What

What Discipline or Institution is there in the World, that gives such encouragement to its Followers? Others may promise great things in this World; but in the Declarations and Promises of another Life, we cannot rely upon any one but him that comes from God, as we are fully perswaded thou dost; for it follows in the next *Verse*, *And we believe, and are sure that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*

Tit. 2. 10, &c. The Grace of God which brings Salvation hath appeared to all men, &c. Where the Revelation of the Gospel is call'd the Grace of God which brings Salvation, that is, which discovers to the World that Eternal Happiness, which was in a great measure hid from it before, and encourageth men by the hopes of that Blessing to live a Holy Life. The Apostle to the Hebrews doth all along in his Epistle, use this as an Argument to the Jews, to take them off from the Mosaical Institution, and to perswade them to entertain the Doctrine of the Gospel, as making clearer Discoveries, and giving greater Assurance of Eternal Life

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and Salvation, than the Law did, Heb. 2. 2, 3, 4, 5. For if the Word spoken by Angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward: How shall we escape, if we neglect so great Salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will? For unto the Angels hath he not put in subjection the World to come, whereof we speak. That is, if the Promises and Threatnings of the Law, which was delivered but by the ministry of Angels, were made good, and the Offenders under that Dispensation were severely punish'd, what shall become of us, if we neglect the Dispensation of the Gospel, which reveals to us greater things, even Eternal Life and Salvation, and which receiveth so great a confirmation both from Christ himself, by whom it was first delivered, and also from his Apostles, who publish'd it to the World, and gave testimony to it by so many Miracles? And it follows, at ver. 5. For
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unto the Angels hath he not put into subjection the World to come, whereof we now speak. The meaning of which is this, the Promises and Threatnings of the Law which was delivered by Angels were Temporal, and such as respected this World; but now God hath sent his Son, he hath in him made Promises of a greater Salvation, he hath put into his hands the great things of another World, and hath given him Power to promise Eternal Life, and to give it to as many as he pleases. So the danger of contemning the Gospel, must needs be much greater than that of the Law, because the Happiness which the Gospel promises, is so much greater: For unto the Angels, who delivered the Law, God gave no Power and Commission to make clear and expresse Promises of the Rewards of another World, *Unto the Angels did he not put into Subjection the World to come;* but so hath he done to his Son, *He hath committed all Judgment to him, and hath given him power to raise up those who have done good, unto the Resurrection of Life, and those that have done evil, unto the Resurrection of Damnation.* As our Saviour him-

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self speaks, *John* 5. 22. And thus *He* hath put the *World* to come into *Subjection* to his *Son*, having impowered him to encourage and argue men to the Obedience of his *Laws*, by the *Rewards* and *Punishments* of another *World*: whereas the *Law* deliver'd by *Angels*, had only the *Sanction* of temporal *Threatnings* and *Promises*. *Heb.* 7. 16. The *Gospel* is call'd *the power of an Eternal Life*, in opposition to the *Law*, which is call'd *a carnal Commandment*; not only because the *Precepts* of it respected the *Body*, but because the *Promises* of it were of temporal good things which belong to this *Life*; and at the 19th ver. the *Gospel*, in opposition to the *Mosaical Dispensation*, is call'd *the bringing in of a better hope*. *The Law made nothing perfect: but the bringing in of a better hope did*; ἐπεσυναγαγόν, *the superinduction of a better hope*; by which the *Apostle* plainly signifies, that this was the *Imperfection* of the *Mosaical Dispensation*, that it did not give men firm hopes and assurance of *Eternal Life*; but the *Gospel* hath *superinduced this hope*, and thereby supplied the great defect of the former *Administration*. To the same purpose he tells us, *Chap.* 8. 6. that

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Christ hath now obtained a more excellent Ministry, for as much as he is the Mediator of a better Covenant, establish'd upon better Promises. How better Promises? Why, instead of the Promises of a temporal Canaan, and earthly Blessings, Christ hath given us Promises of eternal life and happiness. Therefore in the next Chap. he is call'd an High Priest of good things to come: and, v. 15. For this cause he is said to be the Mediator of the New Testament, that they which are call'd might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. Once more the Apostle, Ch. 10. v. 1. makes this the great Imperfection of the Law, in opposition to the Gospel, that it had only a shadow of good things to come, but not the very Image of the things; that is, it did but darkly typifie and shadow forth the things of another Life, not give us so express an Image, and lively Representation of the Rewards of another World, as the Gospel does. Therefore St. John makes eternal Life to be the great Promise of the Gospel, the great Blessing which Christ hath revealed to the World, 1 John 2. 25. This is the promise which he hath promised, even eternal life. So that you see, that the full and clear

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discovery of Eternal Life, is every where in the New Testament attributed to Christ, and to the Revelation which by him was made to the World.

It remains now, that I shew more particularly, wherein the Gospel hath given the World greater Evidence and Assurance of a Future state, than they had before.

1. The Rewards of another Life, are most clearly reveal'd in the Gospel. That God hath made a Revelation of this by Christ, is an Advantage which the Heathen wanted, who were destitute of Divine Revelation. There are many Truths which men may be well inclined to believe, and for the proof of which, the wiser and more knowing sort of men may be able to offer very fair and plausible Arguments; and yet for all this, they may have no confident assurance of them, or at least may be very far from a well-grounded Certainty, such as will give rest and satisfaction to the Mind of a considerate and inquisitive Man. All men are not capable of the force of
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of a Reason; nay, there are very few who can truly judg of the weakness or strength of an Argument. There are many things which admit of very plausible Arguments on both sides; and the generality of men are very apt to be imposed upon by very slight Arguments, to be moved any way with some little shew and appearance of Reason. So that when this Principle of the Soul's Immortality came to be disputed in the World, and the Sects of the Philosophers, the Learned men of those times, came to be divided in opinion about it, some disputing directly against it, others doubting very much of it, and scarce any pretending to any great assurance of it, it was no wonder, if by this means many came to be in suspense about it; but now Divine Revelation, when that comes, it takes away all doubting, and gives men assurance of that, concerning which they were uncertain before. For every Man that believes a God, does firmly believe this Principle, that whatever is revealed by him is true: But especially if the Revelation be clear and exprefs, then it gives full satisfaction to the Mind of Man,
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and removes all Jealousie and Suspensions of the contrary. And this is a great Advantage which the Gospel gives us in this Matter, above what the *Jews* had. They had some kind of Revelation and Discovery of this under the Dispensation of the Law ; but very darkly, in types and shadows: but the Gospel gives us a most expresse Revelation of it, is full of special Promises to this purpose, made in clear words, free from all ambiguity, or liableness to be interpreted to another sense. So that if we compare the Law and the Gospel together, we shall see a vast difference as to this Matter. Under the Law, the Promise of Eternal Life was only comprehended in some general words, from which a Man that had true Notions of God and Religion, might be able to infer, that God intended some Reward for good men, and Punishment for wicked men, beyond this life: But the Promises of temporal good things were special and expresse, and their Law was full of them. Contrariwise in the New Testament, the most special and expresse Promise is that of Eternal Life, and this the Books of the New Testament are full of: as for
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temporal Blessings, they are but sparingly and obscurely promised, in comparison of the other.

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2. The Rewards of another Life, as they are clearly and expressly revealed by the Gospel, so that they may have the greater power and influence upon us, and we may have the greater assurance of them, they are revealed with very particular Circumstances. And herein the Gospel gives us a great Advantage, both above the Heathens and *Jews*. For tho a Man was satisfied in general of a State after this Life, that mens Souls shall survive their Bodies, and pass into another World, where it shall be well with them that have done well in this World, and ill to those that have done ill; yet no Man, without a Revelation, could conjecture the particular Circumstances of that State. What wild Descriptions do the Heathen Poets, who were their most antient Divines, make of Heaven and Hell, of the *Elysian* Fields, and the Infernal Regions! But now the Gospel, for our greater Assurance and Satisfaction, hath revealed many particular Circumstances of the future State

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state to us; as that all men at the end of the World, shall be summon'd to make a solemn appearance before the Lord *Jesus Christ*, whom God hath made Judg of the World, as a Reward of his Patience and Sufferings; that the Bodies of men shall in order to that appearance, be raised up by the mighty Power of God, and united to their Souls, that as they have been Instruments of the Soul in Acts of Holiness and Sin, so they may take part likewise in the Happiness and Torments of it. There are several other Circumstances the Gospel hath revealed to us concerning our future state, which had they not been revealed, we could never have known, hardly have conjectur'd; in all which, besides the Assurance that they are revealed, it is a great satisfaction to us, that there is nothing in them that is unworthy of God, or that favours of the weakness and vanity of human Imagination.

3. The Gospel gives us yet farther assurance of these things, by such an Argument as is like to be most convincing and satisfactory to common
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capacities ; and that is by a lively Instance of the thing to be proved, in raising Christ from the Dead, Acts 17. 30, 31. Serm. 4.

'Tis true indeed, under the Old Testament there were two Instances somewhat of this Nature ; *Enoch* and *Elias* were immediately Translated, and taken up alive into Heaven ; but these two Instances do in many respects fall short of the other. For after Christ was raised from the dead, he conversed forty days with his Disciples, and satisfied them that he was risen ; after which he was in their sight visibly taken up into Heaven : And as an Evidence that he was possess'd of his glorious Kingdom, he sent down, according to his Promise, his Holy Spirit in miraculous Gifts, to assure them by those Testimonies of his Royalty, that he was in Heaven, and to qualify them by those miraculous Powers to convince the World of the truth of their Doctrine.

Now what Argument more proper to convince them of another Life after this, than to see a Man raised from the
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the Dead, and restored to a new Life? What fitter to fatisfie a Man concerning Heaven, and the Happy Estate of those there, than to see one visibly taken up into Heaven? And what more fit to assure us, that the Promises of the Gospel are real, and shall be made good to us, than to see him who made these Promises to us, raise himself from the Dead, and go up into Heaven, and from thence to dispense miraculous Gifts and Powers abroad into the World, as Evidences of the Power and Authority which he was invested withal? All the Philosophical Arguments that a Man can bring for the Soul's Immortality, and another Life, will have no force upon vulgar Apprehensions, in comparison of these sensible Demonstrations, which give an Experiment of the thing, and furnish us with an Instance of something of the same kind, and of equal difficulty with that which is propounded to our belief.

4. And lastly, the Effects which the clear discovery of this Truth had upon the World, are such, as the World never

never saw before, and are a farther Inducement to perswade us of the Truth and the Reality of it. After the Gospel was entertained in the World, to shew, that those who embraced it did fully believe this Principle, and were abundantly satisfied concerning the Rewards and Happiness of another Life, they did for the sake of their Religion despise this Life and all the Enjoyments of it, from a thorow perswasion of a far greater Happiness than any this World could afford, remaining in the next Life. With what chearfulness did they suffer Persecutions, with what Joy and Triumph did they welcome Torments, and embrace Death, *knowing in themselves that they had in Heaven a better and more enduring Substance!* Thus when *Life and Immortality was brought to light by the Gospel*, Death was as it were quite *abolish'd*; those of the weakest Age and Sex, Women and Children, did familiarly encounter it with as great a bravery, and bore up against the Terrors of it with as much courage, as any of the greatest Spirits among the *Romans* ever did: and this not in a few Instances, but in vast numbers.

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No Emperor in World ever had so numerous an Army of Persons resolved to fight for him, as this *Captain of our Salvation*, this *Prince of Life and Glory* had of Persons courageously resolved, and chearfully contented to die for him.

Now this wonderful Effect, the like of which the World never saw before, was very suitable to the Nature of this Doctrine. Suppose that God from Heaven should have given men assurance of another Life after this, in which good men should be unspeakably happy: What more reasonable to imagine, than that Persons so assured should despise this Life, and all the Enjoyments of it, in comparison of the Eternal and unconceivable Happiness, which they were persuaded they should be made partakers of in another World? So that whatever assurance an express and clear Revelation from God of the Soul's Immortality and another Life, together with the particular Circumstances of that State; whatever Assurance a lively Instance and Example of the thing, in the Person of him who brings this Doctrine

Doctrine to the World; whatever consequent Miracles, and suitable Effects upon the Minds of men to such a Principle: I say, whatever Assurance and Satisfaction these can give of this Principle, all this the Gospel hath given us, beyond whatever the Heathen or *Jews* had before.

The Inference I shall make from this Discourse, shall be only this: That if there be such a State after this Life, then how does it concern every Man to provide for it? Every Action that we do in this Life, will have a good or bad Influence upon our Everlasting Condition, and the Consequences of it will extend themselves to Eternity. Did men seriously consider this, that they carry about them Immortal Souls that shall live for ever, they would not trifle away the Opportunities of this Life, bend all their Thoughts, and imploy their Designs in the present gratification of their Senses, and the Satisfaction of their fleshly part, which shall shortly die and moulder into

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dust: but they would make Provision for the State which is beyond the Grave, and lay Designs for Eternity, which is infinitely the most considerable Duration; they would not, like Children, take care for the present, without any prospect to the future, and lay out all they have to please themselves for a day, without any regard to the remaining part of their lives. Nothing can be more unbecoming Christians, whose whole Religion pretends to be built upon the firm belief of another World, than to be intent upon the things of this present Life, to the neglect of their Souls and all Eternity.

Seeing then we pretend to be assur'd of Immortal Life, and to have clear discoveries of Everlasting Happiness and Glory, as we hope to be made partakers of this Portion, let us live as it becomes the Candidates of Heaven, those that are Heirs of another World, and *the Children of the Resurrection*, that this Grace of God, which hath brought Salvation, may teach us to deny ungodliness and worldly

should have upon us.

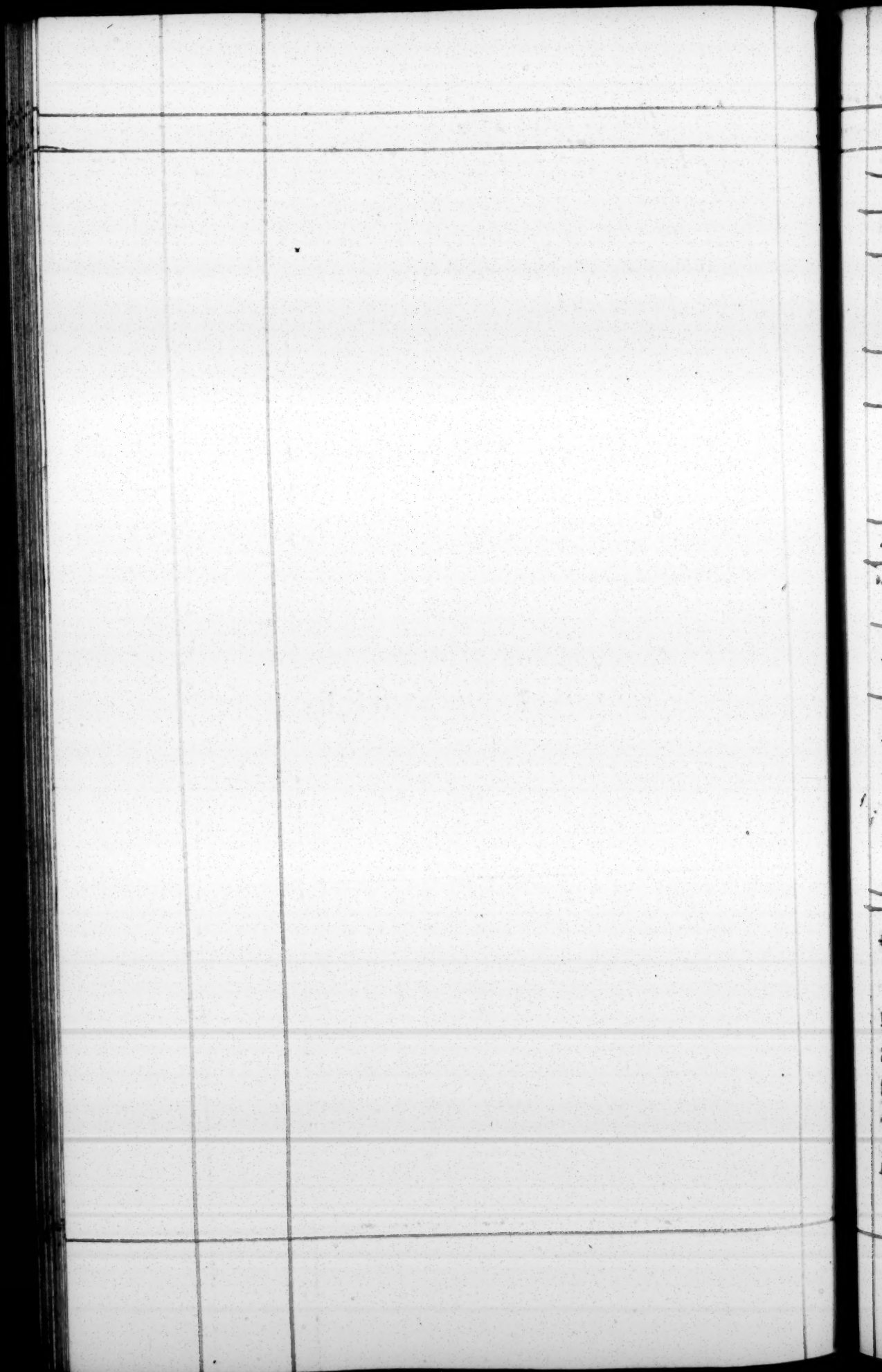
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worldly Lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present Life, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

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SERMON V.

Of the Certainty of a future
Judgment.

The First Sermon on this Text.

2 COR. V. 10.

For we must all appear before the Judgment-Seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his Body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

THE Apostle, in the beginning of this Chapter, expresseth his earnest desire, if God saw it fit, to quit this earthly Tabernacle, for a house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens, to be absent from the Body, and present with the Lord. But however

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God should dispose of him, he tells us that he made it his constant endeavour, so to behave himself, that both in this present State, whilst he continued in the Body, and when he should quit it, and appear before God, he might be approved and accepted of him. And that which made him so careful was, because there was a day certainly coming, wherein every Man must give an account of himself to the great Judg of the World, and receive the just Recompence of his Actions done in this Life, v. 9, 10. *Wherefore we labour, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the Judgment-Seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the Body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

Which words are so plain and powerful, so easie to be understood, and of such a mighty Force and Influence, if thorowly believed, that the very repeating of them is sufficient to awaken men to a serious care of their Lives and Actions, and a powerful Consideration to perswade them to do

do every thing, with respect to that solemn account they must one day make to God of all the Actions done in this Life.

But that the Truth contained in them, may make the greater Impression upon us, I shall distinctly consider the words, and handle, as briefly as I can, the several Propositions contained in them.

The general and principal Proposition contained in these words is, the Certainty of a future Judgment.

But besides this principal Proposition, which comprehends the general meaning and intention of these words, there are *Four* other more particular Propositions contained in them.

First, That the Administration of this Judgment will be committed to the Lord Jesus Christ; for which Reason the Tribunal before which we must appear, is called, *The Judgment-Seat of Christ. We must all appear before the Judgment-Seat of Christ.*

Secondly,

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Secondly, That all men are liable to this Judgment; no Person of what condition soever shall be exempted from it. *We must all appear.*

Thirdly, That all the Actions which men have done in this Life shall then come to account, and they shall be judged for them. *That every one may receive the things done in the Body..*

Fourthly, That Sentence will then be past according to the quality of mens Actions, whether good or bad: *Every one shall receive according to that he hath done, whether it be good or evil.*

But I shall at present only speak to the principal Proposition contained in the words, concerning the Certainty of a future and general Judgment, *viz.* That at the end of the World, there shall be a general and publick Assize, when all Persons that have lived in this World (except only the Judge himself, our blessed Saviour, who is *the Man ordained by God to judge the World*) shall come upon their Trial, and

and all the Actions which they have done, shall come under a strict examination; and according as men have demeaned themselves in this World, towards God and Man, they shall receive Sentence, and Rewards shall be distributed to them, according to the Nature and Quality of their Actions. And tho all these Particulars be not exprest in the Text, yet they are virtually contained in the general expressions of it, and fully and clearly delivered in other Texts of Scripture.

The Truth and Certainty of a future and general Judgment, I shall endeavour to confirm from these *three* Heads of Arguments.

I. From the Acknowledgments of natural Light.

II. From the Notions which men generally have of God and his Providence.

III. From exprest and clear Revelation of Holy Scripture.

I. From

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I. From the Acknowledgments of natural Light. And I might shew the general consent of Mankind in this matter, by all sorts of human Testimonies, and from all kinds of Writers in all Ages: But this would be almost endless, and not so proper for a plain and practical Discourse upon this Subject. And therefore passing by testimonies, I shall mainly insist upon this, that the Consciences of men do secretly acknowledg a difference between Good and Evil. Hence is it that men find great Peace and Quiet and Satisfaction of Mind, in the doing of good and virtuous Actions, and have secret and comfortable hopes, that these kinds of Actions will some time or other be considered and rewarded; and they are apt to maintain these hopes, and to support themselves with them, even when they despair to meet with any Reward of their good and honest Actions in this World.

And on the other hand, men find a secret Fear and Horror, and are inwardly ashamed and confounded in their own Minds, when they are about


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bout a wicked enterprize, and engaged in an ill Design; their Consciences check them and terrifie them, and their own Minds bode ill to them, as if Mischief and Vengeance would overtake them one time or other; and this, when no Eye sees them, and what they are a doing does not fall under the cognizance of any Human Court or Tribunal, nor is liable to any Censure or Punishment from any Human Authority; yet for all that, they have many stings and lashes from their own Minds, feel many checks and rebukes from their own Consciences, when they do any thing which they ought not to do, tho no Man can charge them with it, or call them to an account for it.

Now these Hopes and Fears do argue, if not the firm Belief and Perswasion of a future Judgment, yet great suspicions and misgivings of it in bad men; and in good men, secret and comfortable Apprehensions concerning it. From whence else can it be, that good men, tho they find that Virtue is discountenanced, and Goodness many times suffers, and is per-

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persecuted in this World, and that the best Actions and Designs are often unsuccessful; whence I say, is it that good men, notwithstanding this, bear up and persist in their course, but because they have this inward Apprehension and Perswasion, that there will be a time, when Virtue and Goodness will be considered and rewarded, tho not in this World? And whence is it, that bad men, tho they prosper in their Impiety, are yet guilty and fearful and timorous; but because they stand in awe of a Being, greater and more righteous and more powerful than themselves; but because they have some secret Apprehensions of an invisible Judge, and inward presage of a future Vengeance, which sooner or later will overtake them; and because they believe there will be a time when all the Wickedness they have done shall be accounted for? Insomuch that when they have done what they can, they cannot shake off these Fears, nor quit themselves of these Apprehensions of Divine Justice, threatening and pursuing them for their evil Deeds. All which are plain Acknowledgments of a natural Apprehension and Perswasion

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on born with us, and riveted in our Minds, concerning a future Judgment.


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II. This will farther appear from the natural Notions which men have of a God, and his Providence. This is essential to the Notion of a God, that he is Good, and Holy, and Just ; and consequently, that he loves Goodness, and hates Iniquity ; and therefore it must be agreeable to his nature, to countenance the one, and to discountenance the other, in such a manner as becomes the wise Sovereign and Governour of the World. Now this cannot be solemnly and openly done, but by a publick distribution of Rewards and Punishments ; and this we see is not done in this World. The Dispensations of God's Providence in this World, toward good and bad men, are many times very promiscuous, and very cross, and contrary to what might be expected from the Wise and Just Sovereign of the World, from one whom we believe to love Righteousness, and to hate Iniquity. For Virtuous and Holy Men are often ill treated in this World, grievously harassed and afflicted, and that *for Righteousness sake :*
and

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and bad men many times flourish, and are prosperous, *they are not in trouble like other men, neither are they plagued like other men.* And this is a very great Objection against the Providence of God ; if there were no other consideration had of Virtue and Vice, no other kind of Retribution made to good and bad men, but what we see in this World. And therefore the Justice of the Divine Providence seems to require, that there should be a day of Recompence, and a solemn and publick distribution of Rewards and Punishments to the Righteous and to the Wicked. For this is plainly a state of trial and probation, of patience, and forbearance to Sinners, and of exercise to good Men ; and being a state of trial, it is not so proper a season for the distribution of publick Justice. But since the Justice of God doth not appear in this World, it seems very reasonable to believe, that there will be a time when it will be made manifest, and every Eye shall see it ; that God will one day fully vindicate his Righteousness, and acquit the honour of his Justice, and that there shall be a general Assize held, when
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tafts of Heaven, fome earneft of their future happinefs in this life: And on the other hand, he many times gives finners fome *præjudicia divini judicis*, fome intimations of a future Judgment, and shadows of that *utter darknefs*, where they are to dwell for ever; he drops down now and then a little of Hell into the Conscience of a sinner. That fire which is kindled in some mens Consciences in this Life, that unspeakable anguish, and those inexplicable horrors, which some sinners have felt in this World, may serve to give us notice of the extream severity of the Divine Justice towards impenitent sinners; that miraculous deluge that swept away the old World; those stupendous and terrible showers of Fire and Brimstone, which consumed *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, and the Cities about; that dreadful Earthquake, which swallowed up *Corah* and his Company, and let them down as it were quick into Hell, may serve for pledges and earnestts to us of the dismal Punishments and Torments of the next World.

But notwithstanding all these particular

cular and remarkable instances of the Divine Justice, yet considering how unequal and promiscuous the greatest part of God's Providences are in this World, it is highly requisite, that there should be a general Judgment, for a more clear and full manifestation of the Justice and Equity of the Divine Providence.

II. But this will most evidently appear from the clear and express Revelation of the Holy Scripture. I will not cite Texts out of the Old Testament to this purpose, because these things were but obscurely revealed to the *Jews* in comparison, *Life and Immortality being brought to light by the Gospel*. Yet St. *Jude* tells us, that there was an early Revelation of this to the old World, *ver. 14, 15. And Enoch also the seventh from Adam prophesied of these, saying, behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his Saints, to execute Judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly.* But whether this refer to the Flood, or the final Judgment of the World, is not so clear and certain; however this is most plainly revealed by our Blessed Lord and Saviour,

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viour, in the New Testament. The proceſs of this great day, with ſeveral of the particular Circumſtances of it, are fully deſcrib'd by our Saviour, *Matth. 25.* and in the Viſion of St. *John, Revel. 20. 11, 12, 13.* And the Apoſtles of our Lord and Saviour do moſt frequently declare and inculcate it. *Acts 17. 30, 31.* But now commandeth all men every where to Repent: Becauſe he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the World in Righteouſneſs, by that Man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given aſſurance unto all men, in that he hath raiſed him from the dead. *Rom. 2. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.* Where ſpeaking of the day of Judgment, he calls it, *The day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous Judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds: To them, who by patient continuance in well-doing ſeek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteouſneſs; indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguiſh upon every Soul of man that doth evil. 1 Pet. 1. 17.* And if ye call on the Father, who without reſpect of perſons judgeth according

according to every mans work. 2 Pet. 3. 10. But the day of the Lord will come, in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, &c.

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Thus you see the truth and certainty of a future Judgment confirmed, from the acknowledgments of mens natural Hopes and Fears, from the natural Notions which men have concerning God and his Providence, and from plain Revelation of Scripture.

All that I shall do farther at present shall be to make some reflections upon what hath been delivered, concerning the certainty of a future general Judgment. And,

I. If there be such a Day certainly a coming, it may justly be matter of wonder and astonishment to us, to see the general impiety and stupidity of men, how wicked they are, and how careless of their lives and actions, and how insensible of that *great and terrible day of the Lord*, which is coming upon all flesh, and for any thing we know to the contrary, may be very near us, and *even at the door*. How

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securely

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securely do the great part of men pass away their time, some in worldly business, others in worldly pleasures and vanity, and a great many in wickedness and vice? Surely such men have no apprehensions of a Future Judgment; surely they do not believe that there will be any memorial of their actions in another World, and that they shall be called to a strict and severe account for all the actions of this life: They do not think that there is a Just and Powerful Being above them, who now observes every thing that they do, and will one day judge them for it; that there is a Pen always writing, and making a faithful Record of all the passages of their lives; and that these *Volumes* shall one day be produced and opened, and men shall be judged out of the things that are written in them; and all our thoughts, words, and actions shall pass under a most severe tryal and examination.

Or if men do believe these things, they stifle and suppress this belief, and *detain this great truth of God in unrighteousness*; they do not attend to it, and consider it, that it may have

have its due awe and influence upon their lives. For it is not imaginable, that if men were possess'd with a firm belief and perswasion of this *great and terrible day of the Lord*, they should be so careless and secure, as we see they are, and have so little regard to what they do; that they should pass whole days, and weeks, and years, in the gross neglect of God and Religion, and of their immortal Souls; that they should *spend their days in vanity, and their years in pleasure*; that they should live in a continued course of impiety and profaneness, of lewdness and intemperance, in the cursed habits of swearing and cursing; which are now grown so common among us, that a Man cannot walk in the Street, without having his ears grated with this hellish noise; and that they should go on in these courses, without any great regret and disturbance, as if no danger attended them, as if Justice were asleep, and all their Actions would be buried with them, and never rise up against them.

What can we resolve this into, but either into habitual or actual Atheism

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theism and Infidelity? Either men do not at all believe a Judgment to come; or else they do not actually consider it, and attend to the natural and proper consequences of such a belief? One of these two is necessary. It seems very hard to charge the generality of wicked men with habitual Atheism and Unbelief, but that the Spirit of God in Scripture so often does it. Psal. 14. 1. *The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.* How doth that appear? It follows, *They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doth good.* And Psal. 36. 1. *The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, there is no fear of God before his eyes.* David speaks as if the wicked practices of men did convince him, that they had no belief and apprehension of a God.

Nay, even after those clear discoveries which the Gospel hath made of a future Judgment, our Saviour seems to foretel a general Infidelity among men, at least as to this particular Article of a future Judgment, Luke 18. 8. *Nevertheless when the Son of man shall come, shall he find faith up-*

on the earth? And St. Peter tells us, 2 Pet. 3. 3, 4. That *there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming?* That is, deriding the belief and expectation which the Christians had of a future Judgment.

But to be sure, if the generality of men be not already sunk thus low, as to disbelieve these things, yet this at least is evident from the lives of men, that they are strangely inconsiderate, and guilty of the most gross and stupid inadvertency that can befall reasonable Creatures. For I dare appeal to any Man of understanding and serious consideration, Whether a greater folly and madness can be imagined, than for men to profess in good earnest to believe, that there is a day shortly coming, wherein they shall appear before the impartial Tribunal of the great Judge of the World, and all the Actions of their lives shall be ransack'd and laid open, and that there is not any thing that ever they did, that shall escape a severe censure; yea, and farther to be perswaded, that

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that as it shall upon that Tryal appear, that they have demeaned themselves in this World, they shall be sentenced to an eternal and unchangeable state, of Happiness or Misery, in the other World; and yet after all this conviction, to live at such a mad and careless rate, as no man in reason can live, but he that is undoubtedly certain of the contrary of all this, and verily perswaded in his heart, that not one syllable of what the Gospel says concerning these matters, is true; this is so incredible a stupidity and folly, that did not frequent and undeniable experience make us sure of the truth of it, out of meer charity and respect to humane Nature, it were not to be believed. *Consider this all ye that forget God, and put far from you the evil day; consider and shew your selves men, O ye transgressors!* who profess to believe a future Judgment, and yet run the hazard of it, as if ye had no fear and suspicion of any such thing.

II. Having considered, not without wonder and astonishment, what manner of Persons the generality of men are, notwithstanding all the assurance
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we have of a future Judgment, let us in the next place consider, *Seeing these things shall be, what manner of persons we ought to be in all holy conversation and godliness, waiting for, and hastning unto the coming of the day of God, as the Apostle argues, 2 Pet. 3. 11, 12.* How should the serious belief of this great Principle of Religion work upon us, that *We must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or evil?* St. Paul tells us, that the consideration of it, had a mighty awe and influence upon him, to be careful of himself, and to be concerned for others: To be careful of himself, in the Verse before the Text, *Wherefore we labour that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ.* And to be concerned for others, that they may prevent the terrors of that day, in the Verse immediatly after the Text, *Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men. Knowing the terror of the Lord;* it were no difficult matter to make such a dreadful representation of this

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this great and terrible day of the Lord, as would affright the stoutest sinner, and make every joint of him to tremble: But it is much more desirable, that men should be wrought upon by reason, and convinc'd and perswaded by a calm and sober consideration of things; because that is likely to have a better and more lasting effect, than present terror and amazement; and therefore I shall content my self with the naked representation of the thing, in the plain and powerful expressions of the holy Scriptures. Imagine then thou sawest *the Son of Man coming in great power, and great glory, and all his holy Angels with him*; that thou heardst the great Trumpet sound, and a mighty voice piercing the Heavens and the Earth, saying, *Arise ye dead, and come to Judgment*. Suppose thou sawest *the Thrones set, and the great Judge sitting upon the Throne of his glory, and all Nations gather'd before him, and all the dead both small and great standing before God, the Books opened, and the dead judged out of the things written in those Books*; and the several Sentences pronounced from the Mouth of Christ himself, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit*

herit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the Foundation of the World; and, Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels. Would not this be a dreadful and amazing sight! Why the Gospel plainly declares that all this should be, and thou professest to believe it. Why then dost thou not live as if thou didst believe these things? Why should not that which will certainly be, have to all reasonable purposes the same effect upon thee, as if it were already and actually present? Why do men suffer themselves to be diverted from the attentive consideration of so important a matter, by the impertinent trifles of this World? Why do we not make wise and speedy preparation for *that day, which will certainly come?* but we are uncertain when it will come, for *it will come as a thief in the night, and as a snare upon all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.* Why dost thou stifle thy Conscience, and drown the loud cries of it, with the din and noise of worldly business? Why dost thou at any time check and suppress the thoughts of a future Judgment, and *put far from thee the evil day?* and not rather

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rather suffer the terrors of it to haunt and pursue thee, till they have made thee weary of thy wicked life, till they have reclaimed thee to thy duty, and effectually perswaded thee, *to break off thy sins by repentance*; and to resolve upon such a holy and virtuous course of life, that thou mayst be able, not only with peace and comfort, but with joy and triumph, to entertain the thoughts of that day?

Reason thus with thy self, If this day be so dreadful at a distance, that I can hardly now bear the thoughts of it, how insupportable will the thing it self be, when it comes to be present; And if it will come nevertheless, nor the later for my not thinking of it, is it not reasonable, instead of putting away the thoughts of it, to endeavour by all possible means to prevent the terrors of it?

We especially, who profess our selves Christians, and live in the clear light of the Gospel, ought to consider, that we cannot plead ignorance for our excuse, as the Heathen World might. We read and hear the Gospel every day,

day, wherein the wrath of God is clearly revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men: So that if we continue impenitent, we have no cloak, no excuse for our selves; Wo unto us above all others! *It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sydon, for Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of Judgment, than for us.* The times of ignorance, saith St. Paul, speaking of the Heathen World, the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now he commands all men every where to repent, because he hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the World in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he raised him from the dead. Thus much concerning the general Proposition, the Certainty of a future Judgment.



SERMON VI.

Of the Person by whom the
World shall be judged.

The Second Sermon on this Text.

2 C O R. V. 10.

For we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his Body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

IN these words, besides the general point mainly intended, concerning the Certainty of a future and general Judgment, there are likewise several particular Propositions.

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First,

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First, That the Administration of this Judgment, is committed to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Secondly, That all men are liable to this Judgment.

Thirdly, That all the Actions which men have done in this life, shall then come to account, and they shall be judged for them.

Fourthly, That this Sentence shall be past upon men, according to the Nature and Quality of their Actions, whether Good or Evil. I have handled the general point, the Certainty of a future Judgment: I shall now proceed to the particular Propositions contained in the Text, and shall handle them in the order in which I have proposed them.

First, That the Administration of this Judgment is committed to the Lord Jesus Christ, and that he is the Person, constituted and ordained of God, to be the Judge of the World. The Tribunal before which we must stand,

stand, is here in the Text called *the Judgment Seat of Christ*. We must all appear before the *Judgment Seat of Christ*. In the Prosecution of this, I shall,

Serm. 6.

First, Endeavour to confirm and illustrate the Truth of this Proposition.

Secondly, Draw some Inferences from it, by way of Application.

First, For the Confirmation of it, I shall do these *two* things.

I. Prove it from clear Testimony of Scripture.

II. Endeavour to give some account of this Oeconomy and Dispensation; why God hath committed the Administration of this great work to the Lord Jesus Christ; in all which I shall rely only upon Scripture, the thing being capable of no other Proof or Evidence. And indeed the whole Mediatory Undertaking of our Blessed Saviour, and all the Circumstances of it, are matter of pure Revelation; this is *the hidden and manifold Wisdom of God*,

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which none of the Princes and Philosophers of this World knew, and which we could not possibly have found out and discovered, had not God been pleased to reveal it to us.

I. I shall prove this from express Testimony of Scripture, that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Person constituted and ordained by God, to administer the Judgment of the great day. Matth. 13. 40, 41, 42, 43. *So shall it be in the end of this World. The Son of Man shall send forth his Angels, and they shall gather out of his Kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: There shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father.* Here our Saviour is represented as the chief Minister of God's Justice, in the distribution of Rewards to the Righteous and the Wicked; and tho the Effect and Execution of the Sentence only be express, yet it supposeth a judicial Process preceding. So likewise Matth. 16. 27. *For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his holy Angels,*
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and then he shall reward every Man according to his work. Shall come in the glory of his Father, that is, with his Authority committed to him. Mat. 24. 30. where our Saviour speaking of his coming to judge the World, it is said, Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in Heaven, and then shall all the Tribes of the earth mourn; and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory; that is, in order to the Judgment of the World. But most fully and expressly, Matth. 25. 31. where you have the manner of his coming particularly described, together with the solemn representation of the Process of that great day. When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy Angels with him, then shall he sit upon the Throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all Nations, and he shall separate the one from another, as a Shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say to them on his right hand, &c. You see the whole Administration of this Judgment, and the management of every part of it,

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is committed to Christ. *John 5. 22.* Our Saviour there produceth his commission, and tells us from whence this Authority was derived to him. *The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son. And ver. 27. He hath given him authority also to execute Judgment, because he is the Son of Man. Acts 10. 42. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testifie that it is he that is ordained of God, to be the Judge of quick and dead. Acts 17. 31. He hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the World in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained, that is, by Jesus Christ; for it follows, Whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. Rom. 2. 16. In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ. Rom. 14. 10. We shall all stand before the judgment Seat of Christ. 2 Thess. 1. 7, 8. The Apostle there speaking of the day of Judgment, describes it thus. When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty Angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on all them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of his Son; who shall be punish'd*

punish'd with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. 2 Tim. 4. 1. I charge thee, saith St. Paul there to Timothy, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead, at his appearing and his Kingdom. Rev. 22. 12. Behold I come quickly, saith our Lord; and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be. I proceed to the

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Serm 6.

II. Thing I propos'd, namely, to give some account, why God hath committed the Administration of this work, into the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ. And of this I shall give an Account in these two Particulars.

1. God thought fit to confer this Honour upon Christ, as a suitable Reward of his Patience and Sufferings.

2. He thought fit likewise hereby to declare the Righteousness and Equity of his Judgment, in that Man-

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kind

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kind is judged by one in their own Nature, a Man like themselves.

1. God hath thought fit to confer this Honour upon Christ, as a suitable Reward of his Obedience and Sufferings, of his coming into the World by his appointment, to undertake the work of our Redemption, and to mediate a Reconciliation between God and us, of his voluntary submission to a condition so mean and low, to that poverty and contempt, and to those extream Sufferings which he did so patiently undergo, in the prosecution of this great Design.

That God hath committed all Power to Christ, with design to put an Honour upon him, our Saviour himself tells us, *John 5. 22, 23. The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son; that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.* The Scripture speaks of this matter, as if when Christ undertook the great work of our Redemption, it were expressly covenanted between God the Father and him, that



that he should undertake this work, and submit to all those grievous things, which were necessary to be done and suffered, in order to the effecting of it; and that when he had accomplish'd it, God would confer this glory upon him, that in his Humane Nature he should be *exalted to the right hand of God*, and have *power given him over all flesh, to judge the world, and to give eternal life to as many as he pleased*; and when he had received this Reward, that then his Mediatory Office should cease, and he should *resign up the Kingdom to God the Father, that God might be all in all*. This is the Scope and Design of the several Texts of Scripture concerning this matter.

With relation to this Covenant and Agreement between him and his Father, he prays, *John 17. 1, 2.* that he would not be unmindful of the glory which he had promised to invest him withal. *Father, the hour is come, glorifie thy Son; As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou*

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thou hast given him. And ver. 4, 5. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And then he claims the Reward of it And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self. And the Apostle to the Hebrews, Chap. 12. 2. tells us, that the hopes of this did encourage, and bear up our Lord under his Sufferings, *Who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.* And St. Peter tells us, 1 Pet. 1. 11. *That the Prophets of old testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.* And St. Paul tells us, what this glory is, Eph. 1. 20, 21. viz. *That God hath set him at his own right hand in heavenly places, far above all Principality, and Power, and Might, and Dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come.* But most expressly, Phil. 2. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. the same Apostle tells us, that in consideration of the great *humiliation and sufferings of Christ, God hath highly exalted him. He made himself of no reputation*

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tion, (he emptied himself) and took upon him the form of a Servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name, which is above every name: That at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth: And that every Tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. And that the giving of this Name and Authority to Christ, upon account whereof all Creatures should be subject to him, doth principally import that Power of judging the World which was committed to him, is evident from the explication of these Phrases, of bowing the knee to Christ, and of confessing to him with the tongue, which the same Apostle tells us elsewhere do signifie our being judged by him. Rom. 14. 10, 11. We shall all stand before the judgment Seat of Christ: For it is written, As I live saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every



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every one of us shall give an account of himself to God.

So that you see that the glorious Reward of Christ's self-denial and suffering, doth principally consist in having the Judgment of the World committed to him, which therefore is called *his Kingdom*. *Matth. 16. 28.* where our Saviour expresth it by *the Son of Man's coming in his Kingdom.* *2 Tim. 4. 1.* I charge thee therefore, saith St. Paul to Timothy, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead, at his appearing and his Kingdom. And it is with relation to this Power and Authority, that the Title of *King* is given to him, *Matth. 25. 34.* Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, &c. And the Scripture almost every where, when it speaks of Christ's coming, calls it *his glorious appearance.* *Matth. 16. 27.* They shall see the Son of Man coming in the glory of his Father. *Matth. 24. 30.* They shall see the Son of Man coming with power and great glory. *Matth. 25. 31.* When the Son of Man shall come in his glory. And *Tit 2. 13.* it is called *the glorious appearance*

appearance of the great God, and our  
Saviour Jesus Christ.

Serm.6.

And this is a very futable Reward  
of his great Submission and Sufferings,  
that he who lived in so mean and ob-  
scure a condition, should come in  
great glory; that he who was re-  
jected and despised of men, should  
be attended on by mighty Angels; that  
he who was arraigned and condemned  
by the Powers of the World, should  
have Authority given him to summon  
all, both small and great, the Kings  
and great Men, and Judges of the earth,  
to appear at his Bar, and to receive  
Sentence at his Mouth.

And this shall be the last act of his  
Mediatorship, to sit in Judgment upon  
the World, to distribute Rewards to  
his faithful Servants, and to punish  
his obstinate and implacable Enemies.  
And when this work is finish'd, then  
this Authority shall expire, and the  
Office and Kingdom of the Mediator  
shall cease; for *when he shall have sub-  
dued all things to himself*, as the A-  
postle expressly tells us, 1 Cor. 15.  
24.

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24, 25, &c. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all Enemies under his feet. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that hath put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

2. God hath committed the Administration of this Judgment to Christ, that he might hereby declare the Righteousness and Equity of it, in that Mankind is judged by one in their own Nature, a Man like themselves. And therefore we find that the Scripture, when he speaks of Christ, as Judge of the World, doth almost constantly call him *Man*, and *the Son of Man*. In the places I have mentioned before, *Matth. 13. 41. The Son of Man shall send forth his Angels.* And *Matth. 16. 27. The Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father.* *Matth. 24. 30. Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven,*

with



with power and great glory. Matth. 25. 31. When the Son of Man shall come in his glory. Acts 17. 31. He hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that Man whom he hath ordained. By the constant use of which expression, the Scripture doth give us plainly to understand, that this great Honour of being Judge of the World, was conferred upon the Humane Nature of Christ. For as he is God, he is over all, and Judge of the World, and could not derive this power from any, it being originally inherent in the Deity. Which likewise appears in those expressions of his being ordained a Judge, and having all Authority and Judgment committed and given to him. Acts 17. 31. He will judge the world in righteousness by that man, whom he hath ordained. And John 5. 22. The Father hath committed all judgment to the Son. And ver. 27. He hath given him Authority to execute Judgment. Now this cannot be said of Christ and God, but in respect of his Humane Nature. And this is clear beyond all exception, by what our Saviour adds, as a Reason why this Authority is committed to him;

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him; *He hath given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man*; that is, because in that respect, and no other, he is capable of having this Authority derived to him; for as he is *the Son of God*, he hath it in himself. And perhaps for this reason likewise, because in respect of his Human Nature, he is visible; and Man being part of the visible Creation of God, and the Judgment of the great day being to be administer'd in a visible manner, and to that end the Bodies of men to be raised and united to their Souls, in order to their visible appearance at this Judgment; it seems very congruous, that *the Son of Man*, clothed in our Nature, and invested with a human Body, should sit in Judgment upon Mankind.

But principally because nothing can more effectually declare the Equity of this Judgment, and that it shall be administer'd *in Righteousness*, than that God hath *ordained a man* like our selves to sit in Judgment upon us. In human Judgments, it is reckoned a great piece of Equity, for men to be tryed by their Peers, to be acquitted  
or

or condemned by those, who are as near as may be to them, and in the same Circumstances of Rank and Condition with themselves; because such are like to understand their case best, and to have a fair and equitable Consideration of all the Circumstances belonging to it. Now Christ, as he is *the Son of Man*, is near to us, *bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, made in all things like unto us, only without sin*; which was necessary to qualifie him to be our Judge; he dwelt among us, and understands all our Circumstances, and whatever may have influence upon our Case, to extenuate or aggravate our guilt. What the Apostle to the *Hebrews* says of Christ as an *High-Priest*, may be applied to him as a Judge, Heb. 4. 15. *We have not a Judge, which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*

That which now remains, is to draw some Inferences from what I have discoursed to you upon this Argument.

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1. If the Lord Jesus Christ shall judge the World, and we must *all appear before his judgment seat*, then it greatly concerns every one of us, so to demean our selves in this World, that we may be accepted of him in the next. If a Man be to be tryed for his life, how will he court the favour of the Judge, that when he comes to stand at his Bar, he may receive a gracious Sentence from his Mouth? Why there is a day certainly coming, when every one of us must appear before the Tribunal of the great Judge of the World; and therefore we should with all possible care and diligence endeavour to approve our Consciences, and all the Actions of our lives to him. *Wherefore we labour, saith the Apostle immediately before my Text, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the Judgment seat of Christ.* This is that which makes his acceptance and approbation so valuable and considerable, that he is to be our Judge, to him we must stand or fall, by his Sentence we shall be cast or cleared for ever.

We

We are very apt to court the favour of great men, of the Princes and Judges of this World, that when we come to stand in need of it, we may have the benefit and comfort of it. But this is not our great interest; for the Sentence that men can pass upon us, doth but operate for a little while, the Effect and Consequences of it do not reach beyond this World, it is not final and conclusive as to our eternal state. To allude to that saying of Solomon's, *Many seek the Princes favour: but every man's judgment is of the Lord.* We seek the favour of the great men of this World: but there is a greater Man than any of these, whom we are apt to despise and neglect, *The Prince of the Kings of the earth, the man who is ordained of God, to be Judge both of quick and dead.* Every man's Judgment shall be from him, 'tis his Sentence which above all other we have most reason to desire or dread. Therefore we should have regard to him, and by submitting to his Scepter, and yielding a willing obedience to the Laws of his holy Gospel, seek his favour, lest he break us with a Rod of Iron,

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*Iron, and dash us in pieces like a Potter's vessel. This advice we find given to the Kings and Rulers of the Earth, Psal. 2. 10, 11, 12. Be wise now therefore, O ye Kings; and be instructed, ye Judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoyce with trembling. Kiss the Son lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little: Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.*

2. This is Matter of great comfort to all sincere Christians, that Christ shall judge the World; as it likewise is of great terror to all that disobey the Gospel, and by their wicked lives confute their profession, and pretended belief of it. Christ is *the Author of eternal Salvation to them that obey him*, and to none else. He hath not only purchased this Salvation for us, but by a publick, and solemn, and authoritative Sentence, will confer it upon us.

Indeed it is justly matter of great terror to the wicked of the World, who live in ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and under the name and title of

Christians.

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Christians, have *trampled under foot the Son of God*, and by their lives have openly declared, that *they would not have this man rule over them*. Sure it cannot but be matter of great horror and amazement to such Persons, to think of this Judge, and to consider, that He, whom by their lewd lives and practices they have so contemned in this World, will sit as Judge upon them, and condemn them in the next. And therefore our Saviour tells us, *Luke 21. 25, &c.* that when the day of Judgment shall surprize the World, and *they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory*; then the wicked of the Earth shall be in great distress and perplexity, and *their hearts shall fail them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming upon the earth*: but that to good men it shall be a day of great joy, and that the approach of it shall revive their Spirits, and raise their Heads, *v. 28.* But when these things shall begin to come to pass, then *lift up your heads with joy, because your redemption draws nigh.*

And this Consideration is matter of  
N 3 great

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great comfort to all good men, both upon account of their Sufferings and Services for Christ. In respect of their Sufferings for him. In this World they are exposed to great Tryals and Persecutions for him: but he, for whose Name we suffer, is to give us our Reward; he, who is of the same Nature with us, and *took part of flesh and blood*, and *suffer'd himself in the flesh*, more grievously than any of us can suffer; he it is, to whom God hath referr'd it, to consider our Sufferings, and give what Rewards to them he thinks fit. And then in respect of our Services. Tho the best of them be imperfect, and nothing that we do is able to abide the severity of his Justice, yet by virtue of his meritorious Sacrifice and Satisfaction, the imperfection of them is pardoned, and the sincerity of them is accepted. For he being our *Judge*, who was our *Sacrifice*, and is our *Advocate with the Father*, we may rest assured, that he will plead our Cause for us, and the merit of his own Sufferings, in bar of that Sentence which strict Justice would pass upon us.

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3. And

3. And lastly, This shews what reason the Ministers of Christ have, to be earnest and importunate with sinners, to repent and turn to God, to believe and obey the Gospel of Christ, that they may have him their Friend, who will certainly be their Judge. This Inference the Apostle makes from this Doctrine, in the Words immediately after the Text. *Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we perswade men*; we who are employed by Christ, to warn sinners of the danger and terror of a future Judgment, who are *Ambassadors* sent from this great King and Judge of the World, to treat with sinners, and to offer Peace to them, and *in Christ's stead to beseech them to be reconciled to God*, as the Apostle speaks in the latter part of this Chapter. So that if we our selves believe what we preach to others, to be the Word and Law of him who shall shortly judge us, and them that hear us, can we forbear with all possible importunity to solicit their Repentance, and to warn them *to flee from the wrath which is to come*? Can we let them sleep in their

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fins,



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sins, when we see them neglect so great a Happiness, and run themselves upon so intolerable a Misery? If we believe that holy Book out of which we preach, and the Discoveries and Revelation there made, we may take an easie prospect of another World, and see *the wrath of God revealed from heaven, against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.* For the Gospel hath made a more particular and clear discovery to us of the state of the next World, and the proceedings of the great day, than ever the World was acquainted with before. It tells us who is the Person that shall sit in Judgment upon us, even *Jesus Christ, whereof God hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.* Now if we know this, and be assured of it, we cannot but deal plainly with sinners, and out of tender pity and compassion to them, endeavour to make them sensible of the sad issue and event of a wicked life, and that without Repentance and Amendment, they will not be able to stand in the Judgment of the great day. When we see men in the high way to ruin and destruction, and

and the evil day making haste towards them, we cannot but warn them of that sad fate which hangs over them, and endeavour by all means to rescue them from that extreme and endless misery, which is ready to overtake them.

Consider then sinner, whom it is thou now rejectest and despisest, and whose Laws thou castest behind thy back. It is he, who for all his mean appearance in the World, is *the Lord of glory*, into whose hands *the Father hath committed all judgment*. And can there be a greater madness, than to provoke and make him thine Enemy, who shall be thy Judge? than to despise him, who can destroy thee? He appeared once as a *Lamb to take away the sins of the World*: but if through our obstinacy and impenitency we render this Appearance of his ineffectual for our recovery, he will appear a second time in a more terrible manner, as a *Lion to tear us in pieces*. He came once as a *light into the World*, in a still and gentle way, to convince and convert sinners: but if we resist  
this

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this light, he will come in flaming fire to take vengeance on all them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of his Son.

And this is that which will make us speechless, and fill our Faces with everlasting confusion, at the second coming of Christ, that we have frustrated and made void the End of his first coming. What shall we be able to say to him, when he comes to judge us, who rejected him, when he came to save us? With what reason can we hope that he will deliver us from Hell, when we would not be saved by him from our sins, and redeemed from our vain conversation?

I will conclude all with that merciful warning which the Judge himself hath given us, and left upon Record, Luke 21.34,35,36. Take heed to your selves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on



*being Judge of the World.*

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*on the face of the whole earth. Watch  
ye therefore and pray always, that ye  
may be accounted worthy to escape all  
these things that shall come to pass,  
and to stand before the Son of Man.*

SER-



# SERMON VII.

Of the Persons who are to  
be judged.

The Third Sermon on this Text.

2 COR. V. 10.

*For we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his Body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

**I** Proceed to the *Second* Proposition contained in the Words, *viz.* That all men are liable to this Judgment, and that no Man that ever lived in the World, except our blessed Saviour the Judge himself, shall be exempted from



Vol. 9. from it. *We must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ.*

I shall *first* endeavour to illustrate and confirm the Truth of this Proposition; and then apply it to ourselves.

*First*, For the Confirmation of it. This I shall endeavour to do from express Testimonies of Scripture; and then by Arguments drawn from Reason and Scripture together.

I. I shall endeavour to confirm the Truth of this point from express Testimonies of Scripture. And we find that the Scripture useth words of the greatest latitude and extent, to express this matter more emphatically to us. Gen. 18. 25. God is call'd *the Judge of all the earth*. Shall not *the Judge of all the earth* do right? Matth. 25. 32. 'tis said, that *When Christ shall sit upon the throne of his glory, all nations shall be gathered before him*. Acts 10. 42. He is said to be *ordained of God to be Judge of quick and dead*. And so likewise, 1 Pet. 4. 5. *Who shall give an account to him who is ready to judge the*

*from the future Judgment.*

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*the quick and the dead.* This expression is purposely used to take in all Persons that have ever lived in the World; not only those that shall be already dead at the coming of Christ, but those that shall be found alive at his coming, who tho they shall not die, yet they shall undergo a sudden and equivalent change, as St. Paul tells us from particular Revelation, 1 Cor. 15. 51, 52. *Behold, I shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, that is, we shall not all die, and sleep in the grave, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump (for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed;)* that is, they that are already dead shall be then raised, and their corruptible bodies changed into incorruptible; and they that shall be found alive, tho they shall not die, yet their bodies shall undergo the same change with those that are raised. And this is the reason why Christ is often in Scripture call'd *the Judge of quick and dead.*

But to proceed to other Texts.  
Acts 17. 31. *He hath appointed a day,*  
in

Vol. 9. *in which he will judge the World in righteousness. The World, that is, all men that ever lived in it. He commands all men every where to repent, because he will judge all men. Rom. 14. 10, 11, 12. We shall all stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ; for it is written, As I live saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give an account of himself to God. Heb. 9. 27. It is appointed for all men once to die, and after that the judgment. That is, as death shall pass upon all men, or a change equivalent to it, so after death the Judgment shall pass upon the same Persons. Heb. 12. 27. And to God the Judge of all. 1 Pet. 1. 17. If ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth every man according to his works.*

And to express this the more fully, the Scripture reckons up the several ranks and conditions of men, to shew that none shall be exempted. Rev. 6. 15, 16, 17. Where you have a representation of the day of Judgment, and several sorts of men in vain endeavouring to hide themselves from it,



it and escape it. *And the Kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief Captains, and the mighty men, and every bond-man, and every free-man, hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. For the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?* Which words are a lively representation of the universal appearance, that all persons in the world, of all ranks and conditions, must make before God at that great day. If any be exempted, they must either be secur'd by their Power and Interest, or overlook'd for their meanness and inconsiderableness; but none shall either be privileg'd for their greatness, or neglected for their meanness. If any can pretend to be privileg'd, it must be those of greatest Dignity and Authority, *the Kings and great men*; or of the greatest Esteem, *the rich men of the earth*; or of the greatest Strength and Power, *the chief Captains, and the mighty men*: but these have no protection against the arrest

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of

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of that Judgment. Nor shall any be overlook'd for their meanness. If any sort of men be contemptible and inconsiderable, it must be those who are in the lowest condition of debasement, *Bondmen and Slaves* : but every *Bondman* as well as every *Freeman*, shall be brought before this Tribunal. And so likewise *Revel. 20. 12, 13.* where all persons are distributed into two Ranks, *small and great.* *I saw the dead both small and great, standing before God, and the books were opened, and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in those books; and the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and the grave gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works.* You see the whole world is ransack'd and searched, *sea and land*, that none may escape this Judgment. For which Reason it seems to be called by the Apostle *St. Jude, v. 6. the Judgment of the great day*; for that will be a great day indeed, in which all men that ever lived in the world shall appear and receive their Tryal.

The sum of all is this, That all persons

Persons that ever were upon the face of the Earth, none excepted, of what Sex or Age, of what Rank or Quality, of what Country or Nation, in what Times or Places soever they were born or lived; high or low, rich or poor, knowing or ignorant, good or bad, young or old, the greatest Princes and Potentates, as well as the meanest Subjects and Slaves; the deepest Statesmen and Politicians, the learned Clerks and Disputers of this world, as well as the Idiots and the simple; in short all, without any distinction or exception, without any privilege or respect of persons, shall at this great day appear before this high Tribunal, and give an account of themselves, and all their actions, and receive the proper doom and Sentence respectively due to them. I proceed to the

II<sup>d</sup> thing I propos'd, which was to confirm this yet farther by Arguments drawn from Reason and Scripture together. And this will appear, whether we consider the Nature of Man, or the Nature of God. And,

I. If we consider the Nature of  
O 2 Man.



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Man. We are all God's Creatures, who have received all that we have from him, and depend wholly upon him, and are entirely subject to him, to be governed by such Laws as he hath prescribed to us, and to be accountable to him for our observance or violation of them; all this is essentially included in the nature of a reasonable Creature, and as such we all stand equally related to him. As we are Creatures, we are not our own, but wholly another's, and perfectly at the disposal of him who made us, and from whom we received all that we have: and as we are Reasonable Creatures, we are all equally endowed with free Choice and Power over our Actions; by the good or bad use whereof, we are capable of doing well or ill, and consequently of deserving well or ill for our doings, and of receiving Rewards and Punishments accordingly; we are all capable of being govern'd by Laws, and therefore under the Authority of God, as our Lawgiver, and liable and accountable to him as our Judge.

And all this is necessary and universal,

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versal, because it is consequent upon the condition of our Nature and Being; and whoever pretends to be exempted from the Judgment of God, he must exempt himself out of the Creation of God, he must *deny the God that made him*, and renounce his relation to him as a *Creature*, must disclaim his dependance upon him, and subjection to him; he must withdraw himself from the Authority and Jurisdiction of the universal King of the World, and declare that he hath nothing to do to rule over him, that he doth not stand obliged to him for his Being, nor did receive from him those talents of Life, and Health, and Reason and other Blessings which he enjoys, and consequently that he is not concerned to make any improvements of them, being accountable to none for the good or bad use of them.

Now if any Man can think thus, that he is none of God's Creatures and Subjects, he may hope to decline and escape his Judgment: but every Man that owns God for his Creator and Sovereign, must yield himself to be subject to his Laws, and liable to his

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his Judgment. Upon this account the Apostle St. Paul concludes all the World, the Gentiles as well as the Jews, to be liable to the Judgment of God; because they are all equally subject to his Laws. Rom. 3. 19. Now we know, says he, that whatsoever things the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world, that is, both Jews and Gentiles, may become guilty before God. In the Greek it is *πάντες οἱ ἄνθρωποι τὰς νόμῳ*, that all the world may be subject or liable to the judgment of God. Now tho this be immediately spoken of the Jews, who were under a written Law; yet he had told us before, it what sense the Gentiles also, as well as the Jews, are under the Law of God, Chap. 2. 14. For when the Gentiles, which have not the Law, do by nature the things contained in the Law, these having not the law, are a law to themselves, shewing the work (or effect) of the law written in their hearts, their consciences also bearing them witness, and their thoughts in the mean while accusing or else excusing one another. His meaning is, that there is no person in the World, but, though he have not the knowledge



knowledge of divine Revelation, and that Law of God which is written in the Scriptures, yet he hath the light of natural Conscience, he hath a Law which is born with him, Enacted, as I may say, in his very Nature, and written upon his Heart; which will acquaint him with the material parts and great lines of his duty; and by virtue of this Law he is obnoxious to the Judgment of God, and stands accountable to him for all his breaches and violations of it. So that from the common Nature of Man, and that which is essential to all men, it is evident that we are all equally liable to the Judgment of God.

2. If we consider the Nature of God, who is impartially just and no acceptor of Persons, this likewise will furnish us with an Argument for the proof of this Truth, That none shall be exempted from the Judgment of God. Justice requires, that every one should have that which of due belongs to him: but of due it belongs to every reasonable creature, to give an account of himself and of his actions to the great Judge of the World; and

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to exempt any from this account, would be partiality, and that which the Scripture calls *προσωποληψια*, *respect* or *acceptation of persons*, and which the Scripture doth every where remove at the greatest distance from God. Deut. 10. 17. *The Lord your God is Lord of Lords, and God of Gods, a great God, mighty and terrible, he regardeth not persons.* 2 Chron. 19. 7. *There is no iniquity with the Lord your God, nor accepting of persons.* Job 34. 18, 19. speaking of the impartial Justice of God, says he, *He accepteth not the persons of Princes, nor accepteth the rich more than the poor: for they are all the work of his hands.* 1 Pet. 1. 17. *If we call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth every Man.*

Now *respect of persons* is, in the distribution of Justice, to have respect to some Qualities and Circumstances of Persons, which do not at all appertain to the merits of the Cause, and upon that account to deal unequally with those whose Cases otherwise are equal. As when two Persons are equally guilty, and obnoxious to the Law, to bring one upon his Tryal and

condemn

condemn him, but to exempt the other from Justice ; or if he come upon his Tryal, to absolve and acquit him upon some account of Relation or Interest or Friendship, or because he is rich and powerful, the other mean and poor, or upon any other account besides the pure Merits of the Cause. Now the impartial and inflexible Justice of the Divine Nature is such, that he is not to be moved and wrought upon by any consideration whatsoever, to exempt any Person from appearing at his bar, and receiving his Tryal there, and having Judgment past upon him, according as upon Tryal his Cause shall appear to be. *We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.* No person whatever, of what condition soever, shall be exempted from it.

All that now remains is to apply this to our selves, and that in these following particulars.

I. From what hath been said, we learn that this Doctrine of a future Judgment equally concerns every one of us, and ought in reason to have the like



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like influence upon us, because we are all of us without difference or exception equally liable to the Judgment of God; not one of us, of what Age, or Quality, or Condition soever, shall be exempted from it. Whoever thou art, how Great, or Rich, or Powerful soever, tho never so big and considerable among men, thou shalt not escape the Judgment of God. It may be thou art a Prince, and bearest rule over others: but thou also art liable to the Judgment of God, and therefore oughtest to remember, that *they that rule over men, must be just, ruling in the fear of God*, and of that great account which they must one day give of that high charge committed to them. It may be now thou judgest others; and canst call them before thy Bar, and make them tremble, having Power and Authority to absolve or condemn them: but remember, that for all this thou must come into Judgment thy self, and give an account how thou hast judged others, and whether thou hast sat and proceeded in these inferiour Courts, as one mindful of the high Tribunal of God, and with a just sense of the Judgment of the

the great day, when all the Causes which thou hast tryed here upon Earth, will be reviewed and severely scan'd in that higher Court, from which there can be no Appeal.

It may be thou art rich and powerful, and one of those great flies that can break through the Cobwebs of human Laws, and escape the Judgment of them: but the Judgment of God will take fast hold of thee, and in despite of all thy interest, and might, will take a severe revenge upon thee. As powerful as thou art, thou art but a Man, and God is infinitely too strong for thee, thou canst not escape out of his hands. *Thinkest thou, O Man! that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?* says the Apostle; looking upon it as a foolish and absurd imagination, for any Man to think, that he can by any means avoid the Judgment of God.

So that so long as we are *men*, whatever else we are, we ought to stand in awe of the Judgment of the great Day; because, let our Rank and Condition be what it will, we are all equally obnoxious

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noxious to that, and can upon no account whatsoever plead any privilege and exemption from it.

II. The consideration of this confounds all those differences and distinctions of men, which make such a noise in this World, and whatever they may signifie in this World, makes them very inconsiderable as to the other. Why then should men be puffed up, and look so big upon account of any of these things, when there is a day not far off, and which will certainly, and for ought we know, shortly overtake us, which will level men in all these respects, and set them upon even ground, before an impartial Bar; where none of these things will be had in any consideration, and where the foolish pride and arrogance of men shall be confounded, and those who were wont to look down with so much scorn upon others, as so infinitely below them, shall find themselves upon an equal level with the poorest and most abject part of Mankind, and shall be ready to say with the wise Man, in the *Wisdom of Solomon, Chap. 5. 8.* *What hath pride profited us, or what hath*



hath riches with our vaunting brought us? All these things are past away as a shadow, and as a post that hasteth by. So that we ought to use well all those advantages which we have above others in this world: if we do not, they will be of no use and benefit to us in the other. *Riches profit not in the day of wrath.*

Serm. 7.

All these petty civil differences and discriminations of high and low, rich and poor, honourable and base, they only hold in this world, and are in vogue on this side the Grave: but when we come into the other world, they will all cease and signifie nothing. There the powerful Oppressor can do nothing to the injury of the poorest man that ever lived in this world, and as little to his own Safety and Security. All that Power and Interest which is now so considerable, and makes its way every where, and does what it pleaseth, will be of no use and significancy in the other world. The great and the mighty, when death hath once arrested them, and bound them over to the Judgment of the great Day, their glory

Vol. 9. glory and strength departs from them, and they are then but like other men. *Job* elegantly describes the state of Men after death, *Job* 3. 17, 18, 19. *There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest. There the prisoners rest together, they hear not the voice of the Oppressor. The small and the great are there, and the Servant is free from his Master.* While we are upon the Stage of this world, we sustain several persons; one is a Prince and a great Man, another is a Captain and a mighty Man; and whilst this life lasts, these differences are considerable: but when we retire and go off the Stage, we shall then be undrest, we shall be strip'd of all our Titles, and of all our Glory, and go out of the world as naked as we came into it. Death and Judgment level all Mankind, and when we come to appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, we shall all stand upon equal terms. For God respects not the persons of the Mighty in Judgment, he will shew no reverence to the Great Ones of this world, but will deal impartially and alike with all. *Matth.* 25. 32. You may there see how the Judge

Judge himself represents the Universality and Impartiality of his dealings with Men in that day. *Before him shall be gathered all Nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.* All Mankind shall then be gathered into one common Flock, among which there shall no other distinction be made, but of *Sheep* and *Goats*; the separation which shall then be made, shall not be of the High from the Low, of the Rich from the Poor, of the Honourable from the Base, of the Learned from the Ignorant; there shall be but one distinction then made, of the Good from the Bad, and the Righteous from the Wicked; there shall no consideration be then had, but only of the Moral differences of Men; all Civil difference will then vanish and be of no account in that day, either to exempt any Man from that Judgment, or to gain any favour and respect to him in the hearing or decision of his Cause. This should make all Men very modest and humble in this World, to consider how they shall be levell'd in the next.

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III. How



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III. How should the consideration of this dash all our sensual mirth and jollity, and put a damp upon our spirits, when they are too light and vainly transported with the pleasures and delights of this World! If a Man be to prepare himself to be tryed for his life after a few days, how will he look about him, with what care and seriousness will he provide for so solemn an occasion, and neglect nothing that may stand him in stead, and help to bring him off when he shall receive his Tryal! The thought of this will spoil all his mirth, and turn the lightness of his spirit into sober sadness. Much more ought the consideration of a Judgment infinitely more terrible, and in the consequence of it of far greater concernment to us, to compose our Minds into a serious frame. For if we believe a future and general Judgment, and that none of us can by any means possibly escape it, then certainly it highly concerns every one of us to be serious, and to pass the time of this life in a perpetual awe of it. So St. Peter argues from this Consideration, 1 Pet. 1. 17. *And if ye*  
call

Serm. 7.

call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth every man, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear. This thought should interpose it self in all our mirth, that we must appear before the Judgment-Seat of Christ. And therefore Solomon admonisheth young men, in the midst of their Sports and Pleasures, to think of a future Account, Eccles. 11. 9. Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.

IV. And *Lastly*, From hence we learn, that the Business of Religion does equally concern every Man. For if we must all be judged, we are all concerned to prepare and provide for it; and a Religious and Virtuous Life is the only preparation for it. How should we order our Lives with a respect to this great and general Affizes, when every one of us shall be brought upon his Trial, and stand at the Bar of God to be judged by him? Many live as if they thought the bu-  
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siness

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finess of Religion below them, and not at all appertaining to them: but if the Judgment of God will equally reach all Persons; then I am sure it equally concerns all to mind Religion, and a Holy and Virtuous Life; for that alone will make us *worthy*, as our Saviour himself expresseth it, *to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.*

And this is the result of Solomon's Enquiry, and of his long Discourse upon that Argument, What is the great Work and Business, the great Interest and Concernment of men in this Life; which we find in the conclusion of his Sermon, call'd, *the Book of the Preacher*, Eccl. 12. 13, 14. *Let us, says he, hear the conclusion of the whole matter. Fear God, and keep his Commandments; for this is the whole of man. Religion is the great Business and Concernment of men in this World, because God will bring every Man, and every work into judgment, whether it be good or evil.*

SER.



## SERMON VIII.

Of the Actions for which men  
will be accountable.

The Fourth Sermon on this Text.

2 COR. V. 10.

*For we must all appear before the Judgment-Seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his Body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

**I** Proceed to the *Third* Proposition contained in these words, *viz.* That all the Actions which men have done in this Life shall then come to account, and men shall be judged for them. *That every man may receive the*  
P 2 *things*

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*things done in the body*, τὰ ἰδιὰ τῆς σάρκατος, *the things proper and due to the body*; so some very good Copies have it: and then the meaning will be, that every one may receive the Reward due to him; the word *Body*, by a frequent *Hebraism*, being put for *the Person*; as if he had said, *the Reward due to himself*, according to the Actions he hath done in this Life, good or bad: but in most Copies it is, τὰ διὰ τῆς σάρκατος, *the things done in, or by the body*, as our Translation renders it, that every one may receive the Reward of the Actions which he hath done in this Life; and then this phrase doth import what it is that shall be the matter of our Account at the day of Judgment, viz. *The things done in the body*, that is, all the Actions of this Life, while we are in this World, in this state of Union of the Soul and Body.

Whether there be any peculiar Emphasis in this Phrase, τὰ διὰ τῆς σάρκατος, *The things done by, or in the body*, as if it did exclude those things which shall be done after death, in the state of separation of our Souls from

from our Bodies, from being accounted for at the Resurrection in the Day of Judgment ; I say, whether there be any such Emphasis in those words, *The Things done in the body*, I cannot certainly affirm, tho according to the Nature and Reason of the thing it seems very probable, as the Schoolmen have generally determined in this Case, that *Meritum est viatoris*, *Merit and demerit are proper to this state of Trial* ; and that wicked men when they are in *termino*, and their State is finally concluded, and the trial of their Obedience is at an end, do not demerit by their Sins, nor increase their Punishment. For altho that hatred and enmity of God which is in the damned Spirits, be a monstrous irregularity in a Creature, yet it cannot well in Reason be otherwise, but that a Creature which is extremely miserable, and withal desperate, and past all hopes of remedy and recovery out of that dismal State ; I say, it cannot well in Reason be otherwise expected, but that a Creature in such a condition should rage against the Author of its Torment and Punishment, and do all the

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despite to him that he can, and wish that he were not, tho it be in vain to wish so ; and it seems probable that God will not bring this to a new account, because it seems so natural and necessary a Consequent of a miserable and desperate State : but tho all this be probable, I am far from being peremptory in it, much less am I confident that it is the meaning of this Phrase here in the Text, and I do not love to build an Opinion upon a single and doubtful Phrase of Scripture. I only mention it by the by, not intending to insist upon it, being much of his mind, who said, *Non amo nimis argutam Theologiam*, I am no lover of great subtilty and nicety in Divinity.

It is sufficient to my purpose, that this Phrase of *every Man's receiving the things done in the body*, does at least import thus much, that we shall be accountable at the Day of Judgment, for all the Actions that we have done in this Life, and receive the due Remcompence and Reward of them ; which is the Proposition I intend as briefly as I can to illustrate and confirm.

And,

And, *First*, For the Illustration of this Point, I shall instance in the several Heads of Action, as they take their difference and variety from the Principle, or Matter, or Object, or other Circumstances of them. We must render an account to this great Judge for our inward as well as outward Actions; for the Acts of our Minds, and every thought springing up there, especially if it be cherisht and entertained by us; for all our secret Designs, Purposes and Intentions, as well as for the Words which we speak, and the outward Actions which we do: whatever we have thought and design'd, spoken and declared, accomplish'd and done, will then be consider'd and examined, and we shall be judged for it. We must likewise give an account of all our Civil as well as Religious Actions, of our Behaviour toward men in all our dealing and intercourse with them, as well as of our demeanour toward God in the Duties of his more immediate Worship and Service. The neglects and omissions of our Duty in any kind will also come under consideration,

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siderations, as well as our Commis-  
sions of Evil. A strict account likewise  
will be exacted of all the Talents  
which God hath entrusted us with,  
of all the Abilities, Opportunities and  
Advantages we ever had of doing Ser-  
vice to God, and good to men, and  
whether we have made answerable im-  
provements of them, for the Glory of  
God and the benefit and advantage of  
men.

We must be accountable likewise  
for Words and Actions of less mo-  
ment and consequence, as well as for  
those of greater weight and concern-  
ment; for those which were done in  
secret, and in the greatest darkness  
and privacy, as well as for those  
which were done in publick, and in  
the open view and light of the  
World; for the good and evil which  
hath been done by our selves, and  
in our own Persons, and for what  
hath been done by others by our  
command and countenance, and from  
the influence of our counsel and per-  
swasion, or example, or which we  
have been any ways accessary to  
hinder or promote; and *lastly*, for  
the



the manner and circumstances of our Actions, as well as for the matter and substance of them; all these will be surveighed and strictly searched into, and weighed in an exact balance, that we may receive a Reward or Punishment proportionable to them.

Serm. 8.

Secondly, For the Confirmation of this, I shall make it evident both from Scripture and Reason.

I. From Scripture; which in general tells us, that *God will bring every work into Judgment*; and that in order thereto, God strictly observes and takes notice of what we do; that *His eyes are upon the ways of man, and that he seeth all his goings*; that *there is no darkness nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves*, Job 34. 21, 22. That *the ways of Man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings*, Prov. 5. 21. That *he knoweth our paths, and our lying down, and is acquainted with all our ways. That there is not a word in our tongue, but he knoweth it altogether, and that he understands even our thoughts afar off*, Psal. 139. 2, 3, 4. That all the actions

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actions of men are recorded in books, which shall be produced and opened at the great Day, and the dead, both small and great, shall be judged from those things, which shall be written in those books, Rev. 20. 12.

And more particularly the Scripture tells us, that those Words and Actions of men which seem most inconsiderable, and are most likely to be exempted, shall be accounted for, and severely scan'd and weigh'd. *Matth. 12. 36, 37.* says our Lord there, *I say unto you, that every idle word, by which if our Saviour do not mean every unprofitable, to be sure every wicked word that men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof in the day of Judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.* By which saying, our Saviour design'dly confutes an Opinion too current among many, that mens words signifie little, and that no account will be taken of them at the day of Judgment; that God will not be so severe as to make them matter of Charge and Accusation, and to punish us for them in the other World; and therefore to obvi-

obviate this mistake, he purposely adds, *For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.* And therefore men must not think, that all their lewd and filthy Talk, all their rash Oaths and Imprecations, all their atheistical Discourse, and profane Jest upon Religion and the Holy Scriptures, all their Calumnies and Slanders of good men, all their officious lies to serve a present turn and occasion, will pass for nothing at the Judgment of the great Day. No, the Judg himself hath expressly told us, that of *all such words men shall give an account in the day of Judgment.* And St. Jude tells us, out of an antient Prophecy of Enoch, that *the Lord shall come with ten thousands of his Saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly, not only of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, but likewise of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.*

Our most secret Thoughts and Actions also, as well as our open and publick Deeds, shall then be brought upon the Stage, *Eccles. 12. 14. For God*



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God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. Rom. 2.16. In the day, when God shall judg the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my Gospel. And this likewise is the meaning of that proverbial Speech so often used by our Saviour, *There is nothing cover'd, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.* There is nothing so secret, which shall not be disclosed and made manifest in that great Day of Revelation, and be laid open in the face of the whole World; especially the cunning, dissimulation, and hypocrisie of men with God and men. Men are apt to think themselves safe enough, if they can but escape the eye of men, and commit their Sins secretly, and in the dark. But this is either direct Atheism, or downright folly; because the eye of God is continually upon us, and *the darkness hideth not from him, but the night shineth as the day, the darkness and the light are both alike to him.* And if we be always under the inspection of our Judg, if all that we think, and say, and do, be *open and naked to the eye of him*, πρὸς ὃν ἡμεῖς ὁ λόγος, *to whom we must give an account,*  
 what

what will it profit us to dissemble before men, and to conceal any of our Actions from them? Nay, if we could hide them from our selves (as we cannot our wilful and deliberate Sins) yet that would be of no advantage to us, because *God is greater than our hearts, and knows all things.*

And then likewise, we must be accountable to God for all the neglects and omissions of our Duty, as well as for the positive commission of Sin, and that in proportion to the advantages and opportunities we have had of doing more and greater good. So our Saviour tells us, that *unto whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required*, Luke 12. 48. Many are apt to think, that if they do but abstain from notorious and scandalous Vices, if they do no body harm, tho they do not serve God so fervently and constantly as others do, tho they seldom think of him and pray to him, tho they have no manner of activity or concernment to do good, either to the Bodies or Souls of men, yet that this negative Virtue will serve their turn at the day of Judgment. But the matter is quite other-

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otherwise, as our Saviour hath most expressly declared. *A good tree, saith he, will bring forth good fruit.* And by the Parable of *the foolish Virgins*, who for want of oil in their lamps were shut out of the Kingdom of God, he declares to us the dangerous State of those who *slumber* away their lives in a drowsie inactivity, and are not careful either to keep alive Grace in their Hearts, or to shew forth the light of good Works in their Conversation. And in the Parable of the *Talents*, *Matth. 25.* he passeth a most severe Sentence upon that *slothful servant*, who *hid his Lord's Talent in a Napkin*, and *buried it in the earth*, without making any manner of improvement of it; *ver. 30.* *Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* And in the same Chapter, where our Saviour represents to us the Proceedings of the great Day, the Charge there drawn up against them, consists of Sins of Omission, and gross neglects to do the good which they had the ability and opportunity to do, *v. 42, 43, &c.* *Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels;*



*gels ; for I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat ; thirsty, and ye gave me no drink ; a stranger, and ye took me not in ; naked, and ye clothed me not ; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not.* Not that Sins of commission shall then be past by and left out of the account ; it is taken for granted, that they shall be reckon'd for in the first place : but the Wisdom of our Saviour chuseth to instance in those Sins, which many hope they shall not be call'd to account for, the omissions and neglects of their Duty, that he might hereby root out of the Minds of men effectually that false Opinion, which they are so apt to entertain concerning such Sins, as if they were of a very light and venial nature.

II. This is evident likewise from Reason. Because all the Actions of reasonable Creatures, as such, are under the Regulation and Government of Law, by which as by a Rule, every thing that we do is to be measur'd. And we have all the reason that can be to expect, that he who gave us this Law, will look to the observance of it, and take an account of all breaches and transgressions of it, so as to reward those

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those that keep it, and to punish the bold transgressors of it: and if this were not so, the Law would want its proper Sanction and Enforcement, and had been given to no purpose.

And this Law of God reacheth all our Actions, inward and outward, religious and civil, secret and open, positive and negative, with all the Circumstances of Commendation or Aggravation that belong to them. And as this Law is the Rule of all human Actions now, and by which we ought to live in this World; so it will be the Rule by which we and all our Actions shall be examined and judged in the next. The Judgment of God will be of the same extent with his Law.

And thus I have as briefly as I could illustrated and confirmed the truth of this Proposition, That all the Actions which men have done in this Life, shall come to account in the next, and they shall be judged for them.

And if so, then certainly no consideration that can be presented to the  
mind

mind of Man, ought in reason to be more powerful to beget in us a strict care and conscience of all our thoughts, words, and actions, than this, that after a little while, when a few days or years are over, all that ever we did in this World, shall be strictly examined and look'd into, and be approved or condemned by the impartial Judgment of God. And therefore if we have any grain of true Wisdom in us, any love to our selves, any sense of our great and everlasting Interest, that great day of account should always be before us, and present to our Minds, and we should govern every action of our lives with a serious and awful regard to it. And if we be conscious to our selves that *there is any way of wickedness in us*, that we have been grossly culpable in the violation of any known Law of God, or in the neglect of any part of our duty, how can we without dread think of coming to so severe an account, and falling under so heavy a Sentence, as will then be pronounced upon the workers of iniquity?

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Indeed



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Indeed if we could do any thing now, of which we were to give no account hereafter, and which would not be taken into consideration at the great day, we then might be secure and careless as to such actions: But when nothing we do is exempted from the Judgment of God, when we are assur'd beyond all doubt, that he will one day take cognizance of every thought, word and action; how circumspect should we be, *what manner of persons we are in all holy conversation and godliness!* how nearly does it concern us, *to take heed to our ways, lest at any time we offend, to keep our hearts with all diligence, and to set a watch to the door of our lips!* that we may not think or speak any thing in the sight and hearing of our Judge, by which we may incur his censure and condemnation. This is the consideration which the wise Man proposeth to us, as of all other the most likely to awe men to the careful obedience and observance of God's Laws. *Fear God and keep his commandments: for God will bring every work into Judgment,*  
and

and every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. Serm. 8.

Can we be negligent of our Lives and Actions, when we consider that all the passages of our Lives are upon Record, and that there is a most exact Register kept of them, written in indelible Characters with a pen of Iron, and the point of a Diamond? as the expression is, Jer. 17. 1. *I remember all their wickedness, and their doings are before me,* says God, Hos. 7. 2. And Chap. 8. 7. *The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will not forget any of their works.* We sin, and forget that we have sinned: but God chargeth himself with the remembrance of all our evil doings, and they can never slip out of his mind.

Did men seriously believe these things, and were they affected with them as they ought, they could not but have a wonderful effect upon their Lives, to make us more watchful over our ways, and to tread every step of our lives more warily. We could not

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*commit iniquity with so much greediness and pleasure, and rush into sin, as the horse rusheth into battel, without any fear or consideration, were we verily perswaded, that every evil action that we do in this life, will be matter of charge and accusation in the day of Judgment.*

Therefore when we are doing any thing, we should ask our selves, Will not this also come into Judgment? When we are engaged in any wicked design or vicious course, we should consider, With what face will this act of violence and oppression, of fraud and cozenage, of filthy lewdness and brutish intemperance appear at the great day? how will it look, when *God shall arise to Judgment?* When we are careless and remiss, slight and superficial in the service of God, and the duties of his Worship, we should remember that God takes notice of all this, and we must give an account to him for the manner, as well as the matter of our actions.

If the Actions of our lives were  
transient,



transient, and the Consequence of them were over so soon as they are done, and no Memorial of them would remain hereafter; if they would die with us, and never rise up in Judgment against us; we needed not to take such heed to them: But we do all things for Eternity, and every Action of this life will have a good or bad Influence upon our everlasting state.

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More particularly, the Consideration of this should have an Influence upon us, more especially to these Purposes.

1. To make us afraid of lesser Sins, as well as greater, because *those* also as well as *these*, will come into Judgment; and we should not esteem any thing little, which God shall think fit to take into Consideration, and to bring upon the Stage at the great Day.

2. The Consideration of this should likewise deter us from secret Sins. We are apt to think, that if we can but sin in secret, and hide what we do from the Eyes of Men, we are secure

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and safe enough: but alas! our great Danger is not from Men, but God; not now, but hereafter. We are now very solicitous to conceal our Wickedness, that we may avoid Shame, and escape Punishment from Men: but God will one day produce all our secret Sins, and bring them forth into the light, for all our studious Concealment of them now. Now we are afraid of the Eye of Men, and therefore chuse secrecie, that we may commit our Sins privately and unseen. Vain Man! The Day is at hand, when all thy secret Lewdness and Fraud will be brought upon the publick Stage of the World, and be matter of publick Infamy to thee, and an everlasting Reproach that can never be wiped off; and tho thou now *coverest thy Transgression as Adam, and hidest thine Iniquity in thy bosom*, yet the time is coming, when all thy secret Wickedness shall be expos'd to the view of Angels and Men; and then Sinner, what wilt thou do, when thou shalt appear before this all-seeing Judge? None of thine arts of Concealment will then stand thee in stead. Canst thou hide thy

thy Sins from his Eye, so that he cannot search them out? or thy self from his Wrath? If thou canst not, what matters it to have any secret from others, when all is known to thy Judge?

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Serm 8.

3. This should likewise dispose us to great Sincerity in all our Words and Actions, and make us always to speak as we think, to perform what we promise and profess, and in all things to be what we would seem to be, since there is a Day a coming when *the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed*, and every Mask of Hypocrisie and Dissimulation shall be pluckt off, and our most close and cunning Designs shall be brought into the open light. In that great day of Revelation, nothing will be matter of Comfort and *rejoycing* to us, but *the testimony of our Consciences*, that in all simplicity and godly sincerity, we have had our Conversation in the world.

4. This should make us faithfully to improve all the Talents and Opportunities which God affords to us, be-  
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cause we are but Stewards, and must give an account of them. We are apt to covet great Wealth, and to aspire after great Places and Power: but do we consider what it is that we so eagerly desire and pursue? All this will but bring upon us the Burden of a greater and heavier Account, if we do not improve these Talents and Advantages to the end for which they were given, to relieve the wants of the poor and miserable, and to serve the great ends of Religion and Virtue; and if we fail herein, a dreadful Account will be exacted of us, and we shall wish that we had been the poorest and meanest, the most ignorant and unlearned Persons in the World.

5. This shou'd restrain from uncharitable Censures of others. *Thou art therefore inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art, that judgest another: for thinkest thou, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? as the Apostle reasons, Rom. 2. 1.*

6. This may help to support us under the unjust Censures and Reproach-

es of Men. If we be innocent, God will one day *bring forth our Righteousness as the light, and our Judgment as the noon day.* With me, saith St. Paul, 1 Cor. 4. 3. *it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment. He that judgeth me is the Lord.* It is desirable to approve our selves and our Actions to Men: but if we cannot, it is a great satisfaction to approve them to our own Consciences, and to God who is *greater than our hearts, and knows all things.*

*Lastly,* This will teach us not to measure our Condition by the good Opinion which others have of us; but by the Law of God, which will be the standard and measure of our Judgment. He will consider every thing exactly, and weigh all the Circumstances of our Case, and make all the allowances that Equity requires. Men can but judge according to appearance; but the Judgment of God will be according to Truth; therefore we should above all *labour to be accepted of him in that day.*

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# SERMON IX.

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Of the Sentence to be pass'd at  
the day of Judgment.

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The Fifth Sermon on this Text.

2 C O R. V. 10.

*For we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his Body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

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**I** Proceed to the *Fourth* and *last* Proposition contain'd in the Text, *viz.* That at the day of Judgment, Sentence shall be pass'd upon Men according to the nature and quality of their Actions

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ons done in this World, whether good or evil. The Reward of Happiness or Misery which Men shall be sentenc'd to at that day, shall bear a proportion to the good or evil which they have done in this life.

In the Prosecution of this Argument, I shall enquire into these *two* things.

*First*, What Proportion the Rewards of the next World shall bear to the Actions of Men in this life.

*Secondly*, The Grounds and Reasons of it. And then make some Application of this Truth to the Consciences of Men.

*First*, What Proportion the Rewards of the next World shall bear to the Actions of Men in this life. I mean, Whether the Rewards of the next life shall only be proportion'd to the kind and quality of our Actions consider'd in general, as good or evil, that is, that good Men shall be rewarded with everlasting Glory and Happiness,

piness, and wicked Men with eternal Punishment and Torment: or whether the degrees of these Rewards shall likewise bear a Proportion to the degrees of the good or evil of our Actions, so that a more eminent degree of Piety and Holiness, shall have a proportionable share of Glory and Happiness; and greater and more hainous Sins, shall be loaded with greater and heavier Punishments.

I. It is clear, and out of all Controversie, that Men shall be rewarded according to the quality and kind of their Actions; Good shall be rewarded to the good, and Evil to the evil. And this is the constant tenor of the Bible. *Psal. 1. 6. The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, that is, doth approve it, and will reward it: but the way of the ungodly shall perish; which is of the same importance with the Expression in the verse before, The wicked shall not stand in the Judgment. Isa. 3. 10, 11. Say ye to the righteous, it shall be well with them, for they shall eat of the fruit of their doings. Wo unto the wicked, for it shall be ill with him, for the*



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*the Reward of his hands shall be given him; which if it be meant of the Rewards and Punishments of this life, is much more constantly and universally true of the other. Matth. 16. 27. The Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his Angels with him, and shall reward every Man according to his Works. Rev. 22. 12. Behold I come quickly, and my Reward is with me, to render to every Man according as his work shall be, that is, whether good or evil. Rom. 6. 23. The wages of sin is death: but the gift of God is eternal life, that is, to those who have their fruit unto holiness, as he had said immediately before. Hither likewise belong those innumerable Texts, in which Glory and Happiness and eternal Life are promised to those who live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world; and Wickedness and Disobedience are threatned with dreadful and eternal Punishment. But I shall only take notice of two or three of the most remarkable of them. Matth. 13. 40, 41, 42. The Son of Man shall send forth his Angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which*

which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father. But this is most fully represented in that particular description, which our Lord himself makes of the process of that day, Matth. 25. 34. where the Sentence that shall be past on the Righteous is this, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world. And on the wicked, ver. 41. Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels. And ver. 46. And these, speaking of the wicked, shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal. John 5. 28, 29. The hour is coming in which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation. Rom. 2. 6, 7, 8, 9. speaking of the revelation of the righteous Judgment of God, who, says the Apostle, shall render to every man according to his

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*his works; to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eteternal life: but to them that are contentious and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doth evil.*

II. That the Rewards and Recompences of the next World shall likewise bear a proportion to the degrees of Good or Evil which we have done in this life, tho it have been controverted, seems also to be sufficiently clear from Scripture. And to this purpose I shall,

1. Produce such Texts as will fully prove it. And,

2. Answer the grounds of the contrary opinion.

1. The Scripture doth plainly assert, that the Rewards of the next life will bear a proportion, not only to the Kind and Quality of our actions, but to the Degree of them; that good men shall  
receive



receive a Reward proportionable to the degree of their holiness, and obedience, of their service and sufferings for God: and that the Torments of the wicked shall be greater or less, according to the degree and aggravation of their sins.

(1.) As for good men; that the Reward, that shall be bestowed upon them, shall bear a proportion to the degree of their service and sufferings for God. This seems to be intimated in those metaphorical expressions used by the Prophet *Daniel*, ch. 12. 3. *They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.* Which is much the same with what *St. Paul* expressly affirms, concerning the different glory of the Saints at the Resurrection, *1 Cor. 15. 41.* *There is one glory of the Sun, another of the Moon, and another glory of the Stars: for one Star differeth from another Star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. Mat. 5. 10, 11.* *Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and speak all manner*  

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of evil against you for my name's sake. Rejoyce, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in Heaven. Which words, if they do not signifie a more glorious reward to those who suffer Persecution for Christ, have no emphasis or encouragement in them. For what cause of exceeding joy and gladness is it, to be persecuted and suffer for Christ, if a peculiar Reward did not belong to those who suffer for him? If there do not, then those who suffer for Christ, are plainly in a worse condition in this World, than other good men who escape these Sufferings; and yet are in no better condition, than others in the next World: and then why should any Man be glad to suffer? *Matth. 10. 41, 42. He that receiveth a prophet, in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man, in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward.* Where you see a difference intimated between the reward of a prophet, and a righteous man, namely, that a Prophet shall have a greater Reward than an ordinary good Man. *Matth. 19. 28, 29.* Where our blef-

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fed Saviour tells us, that all that denied themselves for Christ, *shall inherit everlasting life*; but for his Disciples, who were continually Attendants upon him, and Sufferers for him, that a more eminent degree of Glory should be conferred on them; which is exprest by their *sitting upon twelve Thrones, to judge the twelve Tribes of Israel*. But most plainly in the Parable of the Talents, where every Man's Reward is according to the Improvement of his Talents. *He that had gained five talents, is made ruler over five cities; and he that had gained ten talents, Ruler over ten cities.* Luke 19. 15. 1 Cor. 15. 58. *Be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as you know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.* But if our Reward should not hold a Proportion to the degree of our Service, it would be *in vain* to be abundant in the work of the Lord. 2 Cor. 4. 17. *Our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; that is, our Affliction contributes to our Glory, and adds to the degree of it.*



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2 Cor. 9. 6. the Apostle useth this as an Argument to perswade the *Corinthians* to be very liberal and bountiful to their distressed Brethren, because according to the degree of their Charity, would be the degree of their Reward. *This I say, he that soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly; and he that soweth plentifully, shall reap plentifully;* than which I cannot imagine any thing can be spoken more plainly to this purpose. And the same Argument he useth to the *Philippians*, to stir them up to Charity, *Phil. 4. 17. Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account;* clearly implying, that the more good we do in this World, the more abundant shall be our Reward in the next.

(2.) 'Tis likewise as plain from Scripture, that the Punishment and Torment of wicked Men will be abated or increased proportionably to the Degree and Aggravation of their Sins. Upon this account our Saviour threatens those who continue impenitent under the Gospel, with more heavy and dreadful Punishments, and tells us, that in

the day of judgment their Condition shall be far worse than theirs of Tyre and Sidon, of Sodom and Gomorrah, Matth. 11. 20, 21. And Matth. 24. 51. he threatens that Servant, who, because *his Lord delayed his coming*, presumed so much upon the Patience of God, with a more severe Punishment: *The Lord of that servant shall cut him in sunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites*; intimating that the Punishment of Hypocrites will be very severe, and as it were the Standard of the highest Punishment. And so likewise, Luke 12. 47, 48. our Saviour tells us, that according to the degree of Light and Knowledge which Men sin against, shall be the degree of their Torment. *The servant that knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself to do according to it, shall be beaten with many stripes: but he that knew it not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes.* And in general he tells us, that the Punishment of Sinners takes its Aggravation from the Advantages and Opportunities which Men have neglected. *For unto whomsoever much is given, of him*

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*much shall be required; and to whom Men have committed much, of him they will ask the more. So likewise the Apostle to the Hebrews tells us, that God will vindicate the Contempt of the Gospel more severely than of the Law of Moses, Heb. 2. 2, 3, 4. If the word spoken by Angels was stedfast, and every Transgression and Disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation? And ch. 10. 28, 29. He that despised Moses law died without mercy, under two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment, think ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God?*

So that it seems very evident from Scripture, that the degree of Happiness or Misery which Men shall be sentenc'd to in the next World, shall be correspondent to the degree of good or evil, which they have done in this World; and I can hardly imagine any thing more clear. But it seems the School-men, and other Divines who have been at leisure to tie knots, and to make Objections against the plainest Truths,



Truths, have call'd this also into question. And therefore I shall, in the

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2d. Place, Briefly examine the Grounds of the contrary Opinion; which tho they do but immediately strike at the degrees of Glory and Happiness, yet by a parity of reason and consequence, they likewise overthrow the degrees of Punishment; and they are these *two*.

I. They say, That the Merits of Christ, by which eternal Life and Happiness is purchased for us, are equal to all those who have any Interest in them, and are of value sufficient to purchase the highest degree of Glory for them; and the meritorious Cause being the same, there is no reason to imagine any difference of degrees in the Effect.

*Answ.* The weakness of this Objection, how specious soever it may appear, will be evident to any one that considers, That eternal Life and Happiness doth not accrue to us by way of necessary and natural result

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from the Merit of Christ's Obedience and Sufferings, but of voluntary Compact and Agreement, and therefore is only available so far as it pleased God the Father and him that it should be. Now the Scripture hath declared that *Christ is the Author of eternal Salvation to them that believe and obey him*: but it hath declared likewise, that according to the degrees of our Holiness and Obedience, shall be the degrees of our Happiness; because the Happiness which Christ hath purchased for us, is not bestowed upon us but upon certain Terms and Conditions to be performed on our part, upon the Performance whereof, and the degree of that Performance, the degrees of our Happiness do depend.

II. The other Objection is from the Parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard, *Matth. 20.* where it is said, that *they that came in at the last hour received as much, as those that came in at the first, and had born the heat and burden of the day, every one his pny.* For answer to this, It is a known Rule among Divines, that *Theologia parabolica non est argu.*

*argumentativa*; by which they mean, that we cannot argue in Divinity from every circumstance of a Parable, but only from the main scope of it. Now this Parable seems plainly directed against the envious *Jews*, who murmured because the *Gentiles* were to partake of the Blessing of the *Messias*, and that they who were called in the last Age of the World, should share in this Benefit, as well as the antient People of God; so that by the Murmurers, the *Jews* are designed, who were offended that Salvation should come to the *Gentiles*. And then the scope of the Parable is not, that all good Men shall have equal degrees of Glory; but that the *Gentiles*, which were call'd long after the *Jews*, should be saved as well as they. I proceed to the

Second thing I propos'd to enquire into, *viz.* The Grounds and Reasons of this, Why the Rewards which shall be distributed at the day of Judgment, shall bear a Proportion to the good or evil which Men have done in this life? And,

I. That



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1. That they shall be correspondent to the nature and quality of our Actions, the Justice and Equity of the Divine Providence doth plainly require. For Justice is to give to every one that which of due belongs to him: now of Equity it belongs to them that do well, that it should go well with them; and to the evil, that it should be ill with them, that every one should *receive the fruit of his doings*. Not that we can strictly merit any thing at the hand of God. It is Goodness to reward an innocent Creature, and it is Goodness to reward the good Actions of those who have been Sinners; but Justice requires that good and bad Men should not fare alike. Thus *Abraham* reasons from the Justice of God, *That the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the world do right?* And considering the Promises which the Goodness of God hath made freely to good Men, for their encouragement in Goodness, the performance of these Promises is founded in the Righteousness and Faithfulness of God.

2. That

2. That the Rewards of the next life should bear a Proportion to the degree of the good or evil done by us in this life, is clearly founded in the equity and reasonableness of the thing; it being very much for the encouragement of Holiness and Goodness, to be assur'd that whatever we do for God now, will be fully consider'd and rewarded hereafter; that he will take notice of the least Service that we do for him, and that every degree of Grace and Holiness shall be crowned with an answerable degree of Glory and Happiness. And so on the other hand, it tends very much to discountenance Sin, and to keep Men from running to the height of Impiety; to consider that every Sin will aggravate their Misery, and that every degree of wickedness will add to the weight of their Torment, and that tho they be *Children of wrath* already, yet by adding *Iniquity to Transgression*, they may cause the *wrath of God and his jealousie to smook against them*, and bring more Curses upon themselves, and make themselves *ten times more the children of wrath*. And

  
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And indeed in the nature of the thing, it cannot be otherwise, but that the better and more holy any Man is, the more capable he should be of Happiness, and the more disposed for the enjoyment of God; and the more wicked any Man is, the more he should exasperate his own Conscience, and awaken those Furies which rage in his Breast. *He treasures up more wrath against the day of wrath*, and piles up more fuel for everlasting burnings. The Torments of Hell are in Scripture compared to Fire; now the more fuel and greater store of combustible matter is cast into it, the more fierce and raging it must be.

I have done with the Explication, and shall now apply what hath been deliver'd.

I. If Sentence shall be past at the great Day according to the good or bad Actions of Men, this shews us what should be the great care of every Man in this life; to attend to the nature and quality of our Actions, and to



to observe that difference between them in our Practice now, which our Judge will certainly make in the Sentence which he will pass upon them at the great Day. And yet so blind and mistaken is the greatest part of the World, that they make this the least part of their care and business. Men are generally very solicitous to be rich and great, and to be in a healthful and prosperous Condition, and do with all possible care seek to avoid Sicknes and Poverty and Meanness: but how few are concerned to be virtuous and good, and to avoid Wickedness and Vice! And yet these moral differences of Men at the Day of Judgment will only be taken into consideration: other things will not *profit us in the day of wrath.* God in that day will not proceed with Men according to their outward quality and condition in this life, their eternal state shall not then be decided according to their Wealth or Poverty, their Height and Meanness in this World: it will not then be enquired what Office a Man bore, what Titles of Honour, what Mannors or Lordships he was Owner of; but how he  
hath

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hath behaved himself in those Circumstances, what use he hath made of his Wealth and Power, what good or evil he hath done; whether he hath glorified God, and served the great ends of his Creation; whether he hath obeyed or disobeyed the Truth; whether he hath lived in *ungodliness and worldly Lusts*, or *soberly and righteously and godly in this present World*; in a word, whether we have been righteous or wicked. This will be the great enquiry at that day, and these qualities, according as they are found with us, will determine our Condition for ever.

II. The Consideration of this may comfort good Men under the promiscuous Dispensations of God's Providence in this World. Now *all things generally happen alike, and there is the same event to the righteous and to the wicked*: but things will not be always thus. Have but a little Patience, and the Justice of God's Providence, which is now under a Cloud, will clear up; the day is coming which will make a wide and vast difference between good and

and bad Men, *between those that serve God, and those that serve him not; those that swear, and those that fear an Oath; between the lewd and the chaste, the sober and debauch'd, the meek of the Earth and the Murderers; between the proud and the humble, the just and the Oppressors; between those that persecute, and those who are persecuted for Righteousness.*

Now the difference is frequently on the wrong side; good Men suffer and are afflicted, the wicked flourish and are prosperous: but *go into the Sanctuary of God, and there thou shalt see their end.* Let us but look a little before us, beyond *the things which are seen and are but temporal, unto the things which are not seen and are eternal,* and we shall see all things streight; that *the end of the wicked, who flourish'd in this World, is to be destroyed for ever; and that the righteous, who were so distress'd and afflicted in this World, shall enter into rest and joy: when the days of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, these shall be comforted and the other tormented.*

III. If



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III. If the Reward of the next life shall bear a Proportion to the degrees of good or evil which we have done in this World, then on the one hand here is matter of great Comfort and Encouragement to us in the ways of Holiness and Obedience. This is a mighty Argument to good men *to grow in grace, and to press forward toward Perfection, to be steadfast and unmoveable and abundant in the work of the Lord, because they know that their labour shall not be in vain in the Lord*; but that according to the degree of our Service and Obedience, of our Virtue and Goodness, shall be the degree of our Glory and Happiness. We serve a good Master, who will consider every thing that we do for him; *who is not unrighteous, to forget our work and labour of love*, and will not let the least Service pass unrewarded. Let us not then content our selves with any low degree of Goodness; but be continually aspiring after the highest Perfection we are capable of. Since we have such a Prize in our view, *let us run with patience, and with all our Might, the Race which*

is

*is set before us.* For by the same reason that any Man desires Happiness, he cannot but desire the highest degrees of it that are attainable; and will consequently endeavour to make himself capable of the greatest degree of Glory: And tho no degree of Holiness can merit everlasting Life and Happiness, yet greater degrees of Holiness will certainly be rewarded with a larger portion of Happiness. God is not bound antecedently to his Promise, to give so great a Reward to any Man for his Works; yet he hath promised to reward every Man according to them.

So that there is no reason why a good Man, when he is once come to this, that by the Grace and Assistance of God, he can refrain from gross Sins, and resist the Temptations to them, and perform the great Duties of Religion, why he should with *Esau*, sit down and say, *I have enough*, I have so much as will carry me to Heaven, and I desire no more. 'Tis a sad Presage of Apostacy, to  
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stand still in Religion. He that once stops, the next thing is to look back. This is the Remedy which St. Peter prescribes against Apostacy, 2 Pet. 3. 18. *Take heed lest ye fall from your own steadfastness; and then it follows, but grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* The best Remedy against Apostacy, is growth in Goodness. It is a rule in Policy, that an ambitious Man should never stay at any step of Preferment, till he come at the top, because it is some security to be in Motion. Our Ascent to Heaven is steep and narrow, and we are safest when we do not stand still; Temptation cannot so well take its aim at us.

Let us therefore press after the highest degree of Virtue and Holiness, and labour to be as good as we can in this World, that in the next our Happiness may be the greater; that when the day of Recompence shall come, we may receive an ample Reward, and God the righteous Judge may set a bright and glorious Crown upon our Heads.

We



We ought likewise to consider, that if any Man can be content only to be saved, and desire no more but just to get to Heaven, that such a degree of Holiness and Virtue as will save a Man that can attain no more, will perhaps not save that Man who lazily rests in the lowest degree, and desires no more. To be *least in the kingdom of God*, is next to being shut out of it. It is not to be expected that God should bestow Heaven and Happiness upon those who are so indifferent about it, as to desire Heaven for no other reason, but because they would not go to Hell. Men must not think to drive so near and hard a Bargain, in so desirable and advantageous a purchase.

And then, on the other hand, it is matter of great Terror to great Sinners. *The wages of every sin is death*, eternal death; and every degree of Hell and Damnation is dreadful: but there are Sins more heinous in themselves, and some that are attended with heavier Aggravations in some Persons;

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Persons; these do inflame Hell, and heat that Furnace *seven times hotter*. There are some moderate Sinners in comparison; these shall have a moderate Doom, and a cooler Hell: but there are others, who are extravagant and enormous Sinners, that *drink up iniquity, as the ox drinks up water*; that *let themselves loose to commit all Wickedness with greediness*; such as sin above the common rate of men, with full Consent, and upon Deliberation, with great Design and Contrivance, in despite of the clearest Convictions, of the best Counsels and Reproofs; these make haste to Ruin, and take Hell by violence. Now such *mighty Transgressors shall be mightily tormented*; they shall not be punish'd at the common rate of Sinners, their Consciences will breed more and sharper Stings, and wilder Furies to torment them, and they shall sink into a deeper Misery.

More particularly this concerns us Christians, who continue impenitent, and live in our Sins, notwithstanding the clear Revelation of the Gospel, and

and the wrath of God revealed from Heaven, against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men; notwithstanding Life and Immortality so clearly brought to light by the Gospel. How shall we escape, if we neglect so great Salvation? What Condemnation will be heavy enough for those, who wilfully refuse to be saved? *This is the Condemnation*, says our Saviour, *that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light.* All the Sins which we now commit, are infinitely aggravated above the Sins of thousands in the World, who never enjoyed that Light, and those Advantages and Opportunities which we have done. *The ignorance of these God winked at, but now he expects, he commands all men every where to repent; because he hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the World in Righteousness.* What stripes do we deserve, who have known our Master's will, but have not prepared our selves to do according to it? All that Light and Knowledge which we have, all those Counsels and Instructions which we have read and heard out of God's Word, will inflame our

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Account, and heighten our Condemnation, and the very Means of our Salvation will be the saddest aggravation of our Ruin. What our Saviour said of the impenitent and unbelieving Jews, holds as well concerning impenitent Christians; that *It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for them.* But, beloved, I hope better things of you, and things that accompany salvation. Let us but remember and seriously consider, that *We must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, to receive the things done in the Body, according to what we have done, whether good or evil; and this will certainly have a mighty Awe and Influence upon our Lives, and all the Actions of them.* Now the God of Peace, &c.

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# SERMON X.

The Uncertainty of the Day of  
Judgment consider'd and im-  
prov'd.

MARK XIII. 32, 33.

*But of that day, and that hour knoweth  
no man, no not the Angels which are  
in heaven, neither the Son, but the  
Father. Take ye heed, watch and  
pray; for ye know not when the time  
is.*

**T**Hese Words are spoken by our  
Saviour of the Day of Judgment;  
for tho in this Chapter, as likewise  
in the 24th of St. Matthew, and the  
21st of St. Luke, which are parallel to  
S 4 it,

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it, our Saviour discourseth very particularly and largely concerning the eminent appearance of his Power and Justice in the destruction of *Jerusalem*, which may perhaps sometimes in Scripture be called *his coming*; yet it is plain likewise, that he discourseth there concerning his coming to Judgment, at the end of the World. For we find in the 24<sup>th</sup> of St. *Matthew*, that after our Saviour had foretold his Disciples of the utter Ruin of *Jerusalem*, they came afterwards to him, to enquire more particularly about it; *v. 3. And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?* Where there are two several Questions, to which our Saviour returns a distinct answer. The first, when those things he had been speaking of before should be? that is, the things which related to the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, for of that only he had been speaking of before. The other Question was concerning the sign of his coming, and of the end of the World.

The



The reason of their joining these two Questions together, seems to be this, (as is very probable from many Texts of the New Testament) *viz.* that the Apostles did think (and our Saviour permitted them for a long time to remain under this mistake) that the end of the World, and the general Judgment, would be presently after the Destruction of Jerusalem.

Now to this second Question of theirs, concerning the end of the World, and our Saviour's coming to Judgment, he gives an Answer in the latter part of that Chapter, *v. 29.* *But immediately after the tribulation of those days, the Sun shall be darkned, and the Moon shall not give her light; and then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in Heaven.* Not that the general Judgment of the World was immediately to follow the Destruction of Jerusalem; for there were many other things to intervene, as is manifest from St. Luke, Ch. 21. 24. *That the Jews should be led captive into*  
to

~~~~~ to all nations, and Jerusalem should be  
 Vol. 9. trodden down of the Gentiles, until
 the times of the Gentiles were fulfilled.
 And tho these things be exprest in a
 few Words, yet they comprehend a
 long Tract of Time; for the Captivi-
 ty of the Jews hath continued for
 above 1600 Years, and is not yet at
 an end. And then after the Accom-
 plishment of these things, it follows,
 that *there shall be signs in the Sun and
 the Moon, and then they shall see the
 Son of Man coming in a cloud with
 power and great glory.* And then he
 tells them in conclusion, that *these
 things should begin to come to pass*, that
 is, some of them should happen, be-
 fore the end of that generation; and so
 they did, for the Destruction of Jeru-
 salem was about forty Years after.
 But when the end of all should be,
 that is, when the day of Judgment
 would happen, he could not tell them
 the precise time, v. 36. *But of that
 day and hour knoweth no man, no not
 the Angels of heaven, but the Father on-
 ly; and it is added in St. Mark, nei-
 ther the Son.*

Now

Now by *that day and hour* is meant that famous and terrible time of the general Judgment of the World, which St. Peter calls by way of eminency, *the day of the Lord*, 2 Pet. 3. 10. *The day of the Lord will come, as a Thief in the night*; that is, it will surprize Men suddenly and unexpectedly, because no Man can tell when it will be; it will steal upon the World, as a Thief does into a House by night. *But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the Angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is.*

Having thus cleared all Difficulties concerning the general meaning of the Text, that it is to be understood of the day of Judgment, and not as some learned Men have thought, of the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, I shall now consider the Words more particularly, and they contain in them these *two things*.

First, The Uncertainty of the day

Vol. 9. of Judgment, as to us, and all other Creatures. *But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the Angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.*

Secondly, That the Consideration of the Uncertainty of the time, should make us very careful to be always prepared for it. *Take ye heed, watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is.* I shall speak as briefly as I can to both these.

First, Our Saviour here declares the Uncertainty of the time, as to us, and all Creatures, when the general Judgment shall be. And to express this the more emphatically, he tells us,

I. That God only knows it. *Of that day and hour, &c. εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνες, εἰ μὴ ὁ Πατήρ, none knows, but the Father.* For tho we translate it, *no man*, yet in the Greek it is more general, *none knows but the Father*, that is, *God only*. For the word *Father* is several times in the New Testament, not used personally, in way of distinction from the Son, and the Holy Ghost; but signifies the

the Deity, the Father being Fons & Principium Deitatis, the Fountain and Principle of the Deity. Ser. 10.

Of that day and hour; the word *ᾠρα* is not here to be taken strictly for the measure of time, commonly call'd *an hour*; this were to make our Saviour's Expression very flat, after he had denied that *the day* is known, to deny that they know *the hour*; for if they do not know *the day*, much less *the hour*. Now in these kind of Speeches, the Expression ought to rise, and that which is most emphatical ought to be said in the last place; so that it should rather have been, *they know not the hour, no nor the day*: but *ᾠρα* here does undoubtedly signifie the appointed season or time; and so the four Seasons of the Year are by the Greeks call'd *ᾠραι*; and in this sense this Word is most certainly used by the Evangelist St. John, Ch. 7. 30. *But no man laid hands on him, speaking of Christ, because his hour was not yet come, that is the time appointed for his Suffering; and that, which in the Text is called hour, is in the next Verse*

Vol. 9. Verse call'd *κατερος*, which signifies a particular season, or appointed time. *Ye know not when the time is*, that is, the time which God hath particularly designed and appointed for this great Work of judging the World.

2. He excludes from the knowledge of it, those who were most likely to know it, if God had not absolutely reserved it to himself. *Of that day and hour knows none, no not the Angels, neither the Son.*

(1.) *Not the Angels, which are in heaven*; tho they be Creatures of so perfect a Knowledge, tho they be the *ministers of God*, and do continually attend upon him, and *behold his face*, and understand much more of the Works of God, and his Providence in regard to the affairs of the World, than we that live here below in so much Error and Ignorance, that *dwell in houses of clay, whose foundations are in the dust*: yet the particular time, when God will judge the World, he hath reserved as a Secret to himself, and not communicated it so much

as to the Angels, who are designed to wait upon the great Judge of the World, and to make up his train in that Solemnity. So our Saviour tells us, *Matth. 25. 31.* that *The Son of man shall come in his glory and all the holy Angels with him.* And so likewise the Apostle, *2 Thess. 1. 7.* that *The Lord Jesus Christ shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty Angels.*

But this is not only hid from the Angels, but, which is yet more, from the Son himself. *Of that day and hour knows none, no not the Angels which are in Heaven, neither the Son.* This seems strange indeed, that the Son of God, who came from the bosom of his Father, and therefore is more likely than any to know his Secrets, that he whom God had ordained to be the Judge of the World, into whose hands he had committed that great Trust and Authority, should not be acquainted with the time of this Judgment: Nay, that he in whom are all the treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge, and in whom the Divinity does substantially reside, should not know this time, this seems incredible,

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dible, but that he himself hath told us so. It was indeed a common saying among the *Jews*, That the time of the end of the World was revealed to none: but yet one would think, *the Son* were always excepted. Nay how can it well be otherwise, if we believe him to be God? And indeed the *Fathers*, in their Disputes with the *Arians*, have mightily puzzled themselves about this Text.

Some, and those of no small account, have understood these Words, as if our Saviour only intended to put off his Disciples from a more particular enquiry about this matter; not that he was ignorant of the day of Judgment, but that he did not know it, so as to reveal it to them: Which is by no means to be admitted, not only because it looks too like the Equivocation of the Jesuits, but likewise, because the same may be said of *the Angels*; since it is no otherwise denied of *the Angels*, that they know this time, than it is of *the Son*. Others say, that his human Nature was not ignorant of the day of Judgment, but

but that it did not know this of it self, but by virtue of its union with the Divine Nature. But our Saviour absolutely says, that *the Son* did not know it. And therefore others more reasonably have distinguished between his Humane Nature and Divine, and tho as God he could not be ignorant of any thing, yet his Humane Understanding did not know it. And it is not unreasonable to suppose, that the Divine Wisdom which dwelt in our Saviour, did communicate it self to his Humane Soul according to his pleasure; and so his Humane Nature might at some times not know some things. And if this be not admitted, how can we understand that Passage concerning our Saviour, *Luke 2. 52.* that *Jesus grew in Wisdom and Stature*; or as the word *ἡλίκαια* may more fitly be translated, *in age, and in favour with God and man*? For if the Humane Nature of Christ did necessarily know all things by virtue of its union with the Divinity, he could not then, as Man, be said *to grow in Wisdom*.

And this I think may be sufficient
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for the clearing of this Difficulty, concerning the Son's not knowing the particular time, which God had appointed for judging the World. And if *he* did not know it, it is surely no reflection upon his Disciples, if they were ignorant of it, or mistaken about it. Their Infallibility was only in things that were revealed to them, but cannot be imagined to extend to things not revealed. And thus I have done with the *first* thing, namely, The Uncertainty of the time of the general Judgment, as to all, but God only. *Of that day and hour knoweth none, no not the Angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.* I proceed now to the

Second thing, which I mainly intended, *viz.* That the Consideration of the Uncertainty of the time should make us very careful to be always prepared for it. *Take ye heed, watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is.* In which words we have,

First, A general Caution; *Take ye heed.* Look to it, that ye be not surprised

and concealing others.

prized and overtaken by that time. The time being so uncertain, they were always in danger.

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Secondly, More particular Directions how they should demean themselves in this case. And our Saviour directs to two things, Vigilancy and Prayer; *Watch and pray.*

Thirdly, There is a Reason added to enforce this Care and Diligence, from the uncertainty of the time as to us. *For ye know not when the time is.*

From whence I shall observe by the way, the great Goodness of God to us, and his singular Care of us. That as he is gracious and merciful to us, in giving us the Knowledg of those things which are necessary and useful for us to know; so no less in keeping us ignorant of other things, which are not only not necessary for us to know, but which it would be very much to our harm and prejudice, to have the knowledg of them communicated to us. God hath acquainted us with whatever is necessary to direct and ex-

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cite us to our Duty; but he hath purposely concealed from us those things, which might tend to make us slothful and careless, negligent and remiss in it. He hath not acquainted us with the Secrets of his Decrees and Providence; but hath *reserved* these in his *own Power*; because it would be really to our disadvantage to have the knowledge of them. If we knew all Events before-hand, and how and when all things would happen, we should be too much concern'd about some things, and too little about others; and therefore God hath in great Wisdom and Goodness, afforded us the knowledge of those things which are most proper and useful for us, whereby we may be instructed in our Duty, and encouraged and stirred up to it. *Job 28. 28. Unto man he saith, The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil, is understanding.* This is the Knowledge which is fit for us, and which no man is destitute of, but by his own fault, and gross neglect of himself.

So that God is very good to us, both
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in revealing some things to us, and in hiding other things from us; particularly those things which we are speaking of, concerning the time of the end of the World, and the Judgment of the great Day. Which did Men certainly know it to be so far off, as it really was in our Saviour's Time, and may perhaps now be, it would very much abate the force and awe of it upon the Minds of Men; for then Men would think themselves safe, till Death should remove them out of the World. But when, for any thing we know, the general Judgment of the World may overtake us the next moment; this Consideration gives a great deal of weight to all the rest, and is apt to strike a particular Terror into Men. What Man would not be afraid to offend, if he did not know but that the next moment he should be brought to his Trial, before a severe and impartial Judge? So that for this reason, God hath in great kindness to us, concealed this matter from us, and like a wise and good Father, instead of gratifying our Curiosity, hath consulted our real Benefit and Advantage.

Besides this, that it is always useful to the World to be kept in awe by the continual danger and terror of an approaching Judgment, there seems to have been a more particular Reason why our Saviour would have the Disciples and first Christians ignorant of this thing; for which reason he discoursed so to them concerning it, as that they might rather apprehend, that the end of all things was at hand, and might probably happen in their time. And thus it seems his Disciples understood his Speech concerning St. John, as if he should not die till our Lord came to Judgment. And the Apostles in several of their Exhortations, seem to urge Christians from this very Consideration, of the nearness of the general Judgment. So St. Paul, Phil. 4. 5. *Let your moderation be known to all men; the Lord is at hand.* And the Author to the Hebrews, Ch. 10. 25. encourageth Christians to constancy in their Profession upon the same account, *Not forsaking the assembling yourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another, and so*

much

much the more, because the day approacheth. So likewise St. James, Ch. 5. 9. Grudge not one against another, Brethren, lest ye be condemned: Behold, the Judge standeth at the door. And St. Peter tells us, that several impious Men scoffed at them upon this account, as if the Apostles had been Deceivers in this matter, and therefore said, *Where is the promise of his coming?* as it were upbraiding them, for putting men in a vain expectation of it.

And it was no inconvenience at all, that the Apostles and first Christians had this apprehension of the nearness of that time; for no Consideration could be more forcible to keep them stedfast in their Profession, and to fortify them against Sufferings, than a perswasion of the approach of that day, wherein those who suffered for Christ should be so gloriously rewarded; and those who for fear of suffering fell off from him, should be so terribly punish'd. And nothing could be more proper and powerful, to wean their Affections from the love of this World,

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and to make them willing to part with any thing in it, than to apprehend that there would shortly be an end of it, and then all the enjoyments of it would signifie nothing. So that their ignorance in this matter, was by the Providence of God, admirably fitted for the animating and encouraging of Christians to a great Zeal and Constancy in the Profession of their Faith, and in the propagating of it, as thinking they had but a little while to do this great Work in.

And it will be in all Ages to the end of the World, a good Argument to men to vigilancy and constant Preparation: because if they be remiss and careless, the great Judg of the World may *come in a day that they think not of, and at an hour when they are not aware.* But to return to the Particulars I propounded to speak to from the Words.

First, Here is a general Caution, *Take ye heed;* look heedfully to it that ye be not surpris'd and overtaken by that time: For being uncertain when

when it will happen, ye are always in danger. But because this general Caution is only premised by our Saviour, to make way for the more particular Directions, therefore I shall not insist upon this, but in the *Second* place proceed to them. And they are these *two*; *watch and pray.*

I. Vigilancy, which is a large Duty, and comprehends under it the whole care of a Christian life; all that Watchfulness and Preparation which we ought to use, that we be not surprized by that terrible Day; that we be not found in such a condition, as slothful and negligent Servants use to be in, when their Lord comes suddenly upon them, and finds all things in Confusion and Disorder. And to this our Saviour alludes several times in his Exhortations to Watchfulness: Luke 12.35,36. *Let your loins be girded about, and your lamps burning, and ye your selves like unto men that wait for their Lord. Blessed are those Servants, whom the Lord when he comes shall find watching.* And, v. 40. *Be ye therefore ready also; for the Son of*

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of man cometh at an hour when ye think not. So that this Watchfulness implies a continual care of our Lives and Actions, that we be always in such a Posture as we would be willing the great Judg of the World should take us in, doing those things which we should not be ashamed to own, if he should come suddenly upon us, and summon us before his Tribunal; and avoiding those things, which would be matter of shame and confusion to us at his Appearance. *Luke 21. 34, 35, 36.* where our Saviour gives this Caution, he instanceth in some particular Sins, which are more directly contrary to this *Vigilance*; as Intemperance, and an inordinate love and care about earthly things. *Take heed to your selves, lest your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares: for as a snare shall it come on all that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all those things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.*

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It would be a large Work to descend to all Particulars, whereby we should express our Care and Vigilance. I shall mention but a few; but such as will comprehend most others under them.

1. We should resolve without delay to put our selves into that state and condition, in which we may not be afraid Judgment should find us. It is to be feared, that a great part of mankind are in that loose and negligent Posture, in the time of their Health and Prosperity, in which if the great Judg of the World should surprize them, and bring them to a speedy Trial, it would go ill with them; their Case would be sad and deplorable beyond all imagination, infinitely sadder than of a Malefactor standing before an earthly Judg, guilty of great and notorious Crimes, and continually expecting the Sentence of Death to be past upon him. Such is the condition of all impenitent Sinners, who have lived careless and dissolute

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solute Lives, without any serious Consideration of their future State, or Preparation for it ; who have in the general course of their lives neglected God and Religion, and a great many necessary and essential parts of their Duty, and have indulged themselves, either in a continual course of Impiety and Wickedness, or of sensual Pleasures and Vanity. What shall become of these, whom the Judge of the World shall find in this Condition, either actually wicked, or recklessly secure?

Nay those who do in some measure and degree mind Religion, how few of them live under *the powers of the world to come, have their loins girded about, and their lamps burning*, and are habitually so prepared, as if they were in a continual expectation of the coming of their Lord ? So that in the secure and negligent Posture that most Men live, even the better sort of Men, if Judgment should overtake them, how few could be saved ? For this cause *God is long suffering to men, because he is not willing that any should perish,*

rish, but that all should come to repentance. And if he should not by his merciful Providence awaken many Men to consideration and care of themselves, and by some great Affliction, or long Sickness, put Men upon serious thoughts, and give them the space and opportunity to recollect themselves, to make up their Accounts, and so make their Peace with God, and to put themselves into a better Posture for another World, than they usually are in the time of their Health and Prosperity, it is very much to be feared, that the greatest part of those who are tolerably good, would be destroyed in their security.

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But this Patience of God will not always last; but *the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night*, and will surprize the careless World all at once, and give them no time *to trim up their lamps, and to get oil*, if they be not provided already; but in an instant the Door will be shut against them, and they shall never enter into the Kingdom of God. This Day hath not yet hapned; but it will certainly come,  
and,



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and, as our Saviour says, *will come as a snare upon all them that dwell upon the face of the whole earth.* And blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when he comes shall find ready.

So that our first Care must be to get out of this dangerous state of Sin and Security; *to break off our sins by repentance*, that we may be capable of the Mercy of God, and at Peace with him, before he comes to execute Judgment upon the World. For till this be done, we are every moment in danger; and if Death or Judgment should overtake us in this impenitent state, we are lost beyond recovery.

2. After this great Work of Repentance is over, we should be very careful how we contract any new Guilt, by returning to our former Sins, or by the gross neglect of any part of our Duty. A true and sincere Repentance will put us into a safe condition: but then we must take heed, that we do not repent of our Repentance, and bring our selves into danger again, by starting aside from those good Resolutions,

lutions, which we had so solemnly taken up. For every deliberate and presumptuous Sin that we are guilty of after our Repentance, does endanger our State, and shake the Foundations of our Peace: But if we relapse into our former evil Course, or after our Repentance we allow our selves in the habitual practice of any known Sin, either our Repentance was insincere before, or if it were true for the time, we are fallen from it, and all that we have done signifies nothing, and we have the whole Work to begin again. And if the Judgment of God should overtake us, before we have renewed our Repentance, and reformed our Lives, we should be found in the number of *the ungodly, who cannot stand in judgment*. So that, as it concerns us to make haste out of an impenitent State, so no less to order our Conversation afterwards with great Vigilancy and Care; lest by relapsing into our former Sins, and being surpris'd in them by the Judgment of God, we fall into Condemnation.

3. Let

  
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3. Let us neglect no opportunity of doing good, but always be employing our selves, either in Acts of Religion and Piety towards God, or of Righteousness and Charity towards Men, or in such Acts as are subordinate to Religion, I mean the Works of a lawful Calling, in which if we demean our selves with Diligence and good Conscience, we may be said to serve God, and to live in his fear, because we are govern'd by the Rules of Religion, all the while we are about our worldly business, and providing for the necessities of this life, in an honest and industrious way.

More particularly we should strictly charge our selves, according to our Estate and Opportunities, to be very much in the Works of Mercy and Charity; remembering that our Saviour hath represented this as a special matter of enquiry at the Judgment of the great Day, how we have acquitted and discharged our selves in Duties of this kind, and that nothing does more immediately qualifie us for the  
Mercy




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Mercy of God, when we shall come to stand before his Judgment-Seat, than to have shewn Mercy to our Brethren: As on the other hand, the Scripture hath terribly threatned, that *he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy.* By these and all other Acts of a good Life, we shall be in a constant readiness and preparation for the coming of our Lord. And, Oh, what a Happiness and Comfort will it be to us, to be found by him thus employed! *Blessed is that Servant whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing.* I proceed,

4. We should often review our lives, and call our selves to a strict account of our Actions, that *judging our selves, we may not be judged and condemned by the Lord.* This frequent Examination of our selves will give us to understand our Errors and Miscarriages, which if we seriously consider, must needs prompt us to Repentance, and engage us in Purposes and Resolutions of amendment. And the Practice of this is certainly the best way to keep our Accounts clear, and to prevent

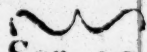
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that horrible Confusion which we shall be in, if Judgment should surprize us unawares, when we have the guilt of great and manifold Sins unrepented of, lying upon our Consciences, like a heavy Weight, ready to sink us into eternal Perdition. Besides that this strict and frequent Examination of our Actions, will be an excellent means to make us more careful for the future to avoid those Faults and Miscarriages which we have observed in our selves before. We should be ashamed to fall into those Errors again, for which we have so lately and severely censured and condemned our selves.

5. Another part of our Preparation for the coming of our Lord is, an humble Trust and Confidence in the Virtue of his Death and Passion, as the only meritorious Cause of the Remission of our Sins, and the Reward of eternal Life. Tho we be regenerated and renewed by the Holy Ghost, and by the assistance of God's Grace enabled to perform Works of Righteousness, and as is said of *Zachary* and *Eliza-*

  
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Elizabeth, to live in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord blameless; that is, in the general Course of our lives, to yield a sincere Obedience to the Laws of God; yet because in many things we offend, and our best Righteousness is very imperfect, and falls extremely short of that exact and strict Duty, which the Law of God requires; and if it were perfect, our Obedience for the future could make no reparation to the Justice of God for past Sins and Transgressions; therefore we cannot hope for our own Righteousness to be justified and accepted with God, and upon the merit of it to have our Sins pardoned, much less to be rewarded with eternal Life. God indeed of his infinite Mercy is pleased upon our Repentance to pardon our Sins past, and upon our sincere Obedience to give us eternal Life; and without these Qualifications we shall never be made Partakers of these Blessings; except we repent, our Sins shall not be forgiven us, and without holiness no man shall see the Lord: but then it is not for the merit of our Repentance and Righteousness,



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ness, that these Blessings are conferr'd upon us; but for the meritorious Obedience and Sufferings of our Blessed Saviour. That most acceptable Sacrifice of himself, which he offer'd to God in our stead, and in our behalf, hath purchased and procured these Benefits for us, and *we are accepted in his beloved Son, and justified freely by his Grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ; and therefore not for any works of Righteousness which we have done, but of his Mercy he saves us.* And here we are to fix our hopes of Justification and Salvation, viz. upon that perfect Propitiation and Satisfaction, which Christ by the Sacrifice of himself once offer'd, hath made for the Sins of the whole World. For the alone Merit of this Sacrifice, God is graciously pleased to forgive us all our Sins, upon our true Repentance, and to reward our sincere, tho very imperfect Obedience, with eternal Life. So that *through faith in the blood of Christ, not by confidence in our selves and our own Righteousness, we obtain remission of sins, and eternal life.* And it is not only in it self great Arrogance,

gance, but great Ingratitude to our Blessed Redeemer, *who gave himself for us*, to ascribe that to the merit of our own Righteousness, or the merits of the Saints, which nothing in Heaven or Earth, but *the precious Blood of Christ, who was a Lamb without spot or blemish*, could have purchased for us. And it is Argument and Encouragement enough to Holiness and Obedience of Life, that without it we cannot see God; and by it we are qualified for that Happiness which Christ hath purchased for us, and, as the Apostle expresseth it, are *made meet to be made partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in light*.

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6. And *lastly*, To awaken and maintain this Vigilancy and Care, we should often represent to our Minds the Judgment of the great Day, which will certainly come, tho we know not the time of it. And if any Consideration in the World will make Men watchful and diligent, certainly this will, That the Judgment of God continually hangs over them, and may seize upon them at any time; nay for

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ought we know, the Judgment of God may now be *standing at the door*, and be ready to rush in upon us, whilst we are so negligent and secure. For this Day, whenever it shall be, will come suddenly, and surprize the careless World, when they least think of it, and look for it. So our Lord himself hath foretold, that *as a snare it shall come upon all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth*: that is, the greatest part of Mankind shall be taken unprepared, when they are unprovided for it; nay when they are generally lull'd asleep in a stupid Security and Infidelity; when the World is grown Atheistical, and do hardly believe any such thing as a future Judgment. So our Saviour seems to intimate, *Luke 18. 8. When the Son of Man comes, shall he find faith upon Earth?* And if this be a Mark and Token of the general Judgment, we have too much cause to apprehend that it is drawing on apace: for never was there any Age, since the general Flood, that we know of, when *Iniquity did so abound, and the Infidelity of Mankind was so full, so great,*



great, and so general ; when Profaneness and Atheism, the open Contempt of God and Religion, was so raging and violent ; and when, as our Lord says, there was so little *Faith to be found on the earth* ; whether by *Faith* we understand the belief of the Principles of Religion, or the Fidelity of Men one towards another. For was there ever any Age, wherein false Accusation, Perjury and Subornation were more rife and impudent ? wherein the Reverence of an Oath was so lost, and the sacred Obligation of it in so little regard among Men ? So that if the great Judg of the World should delay his coming, human Society seems ready to disband and dissolve of it self, for want of mutual Trust and Confidence among Men to hold it together.

And this want of Faith, in both senses, we owe in a great measure to Popery, which by its artificial ways of Falshood and Perjury (which when they have to deal with Hereticks, they have upon solemn occasions declared lawful) hath not only weakned,

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but even destroyed the Credit of Mankind with one another, as we find of late by sad experience. And as for Infidelity in Religion, they have not only given great occasion to it, by the monstrous Absurdities they have brought into Religion; and by overstraining the Faith of Men in some parts of it, have brought them to a disbelief of the whole; as is at this day too visible in many of the most knowing Persons of their Communion, both in *France* and *Italy*: But besides this, they have in their Writings, to gain Men to a dependance upon, and submission to the Infallibility of their Church, undermined the Foundation of Religion, and industriously endeavoured to bring Men to Scepticism and Infidelity; hoping that when they have made Men of no Religion, they will be fit for theirs, which in too many respects, is next to none; and in some, worse.

But whether the Judgment of the great Day be near at hand, or farther off, God alone knows; this is certain, that God hath in great Mercy delay-

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ed it for a long time, because *he is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.* And it is no less certain, that it may come at any time, and will come when Men least expect it, when the World is in great security, and very little apprehensive of the nearness and danger of it; which is Reason and Argument enough to continual Care and Vigilancy: for it may come the next hour, the next moment, for any thing we know to the contrary; and whenever it comes, if we be not prepared, it will be too late to begin that work; if *our lamps be gone out, and we want oil,* we cannot provide our selves in such a hurry; we shall be full of Fear and Amazement, but we shall *find no place for repentance,* and a deliberate preparation for our great Trial. As the great Judg of the World then finds us, so will he deal with us; such as our State and Condition then is, such will be our Sentence and Doom to all Eternity. And is not this Argument enough to us to be always upon our guard, always watchful and always ready? because *the Son of man* may

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may come at an hour when we think not ; and if we be not then prepared, it will be too late to set about it ; the opportunity of doing it, and we our selves are lost for ever.

This is the *first* Direction our Saviour gives us, continual Vigilancy and Watchfulness over our selves in general.

The *II<sup>d</sup>* Direction is more particular, and that is Prayer ; *Take ye heed, watch and pray.* And the practice of this Duty of Prayer will be of great advantage to us upon these *two* accounts.

1. As it tends to awaken and excite our Care and Diligence in the business of Religion.

2. As it is, if sincerely performed, effectual to engage the Divine Blessing and Assistance to second our Care and Endeavours, and to secure them from miscarriage.

1. It is very apt to awaken and excite our Care and Diligence in the business of Religion. For whenever we heartily beg of God to assist us by his Grace to any thing that is good, we mind our selves of our own Duty: And both Reason and Scripture will tell us, that we pray to God in vain for his help, if we will do nothing our selves; that it is gross Hypocrisie, and an impudent mocking of God, to implore his Grace and Assistance, if we be not resolved to put forth our own Endeavours. Prayer indeed supposeth that we stand in need of the Divine help; but it implies likewise a Resolution on our part, to do what we can our selves; otherwise *we ask in vain*, and have no reason to hope that God will hear our Prayers, and grant our Requests, tho never so earnestly and importunately put up to him.

2. If we use our sincere Endeavours for the effecting of what we pray for, Prayer is the most effectual means to engage the Divine Blessing and Assistance

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ance to second our Endeavours, and to secure them from miscarriage. And without the Aid of God's Grace, and his Blessing upon our Endeavours, they will all be ineffectual, and signify nothing; we shall not be able so much as *to watch one hour*. If God be not with us, *the Watchman waketh but in vain*: for *the way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps*. It is necessary therefore, that we continually implore the Divine Grace, and that we do not rely upon our own Strength, and the fickleness and uncertainty of our own Resolutions, according to the wise Advice of Solomon, Prov. 3. 5, 6. *Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledg him, and he shall direct thy paths*. Therefore as ever we hope to persevere and continue in a good Course, and to order our lives so, as to be in preparation for Judgment, let us every day by continual and fervent Prayer, apply ourselves to the Fountain of Grace and Mercy, for his Aid and Help, to make us vigilant over our selves, and all the



the Actions of our Lives ; to enable us to a patient continuance in well-doing, to keep us from every evil work, and to preserve us to his heavenly Kingdom.

And to this purpose, we have all the encouragement which the assurance of the Divine Goodness, and the security of his never-failing Promise can give us. It is but asking, and receiving. So St. James tells us, speaking of this Heavenly Wisdom to direct us in our Christian Course, so as we may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing, Jam. 1. 5. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. I proceed to the

Third and last part of the Text, which is the Reason which our Saviour here adds to enforce our Care and Diligence in a matter of so great Concernment, viz. The Uncertainty, as to us, of the particular time, when this Day of Judgment will be. Ye know not when the time is. Therefore we should always be in expectation of it,

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it, always in a readiness and preparation for it. The Certainty of the thing, and that God hath appointed and determined a time, in which he will judge the World in Righteousness, tho we were sure this Day were far off, ought in all reason to make us very watchful over our selves, and very careful of all our Actions, very strict and conscientious in the discharge and performance of every part of our Duty. If there were no more but this, that we must one day be call'd to a strict Account for all the Actions of our lives, and receive the just Recompence of them, and according to the nature and quality of them be sentenc'd to eternal Happiness or everlasting Misery; this alone were a mighty Argument. So St. Peter reasons, 2 Pet. 3. 10, 11. *But the day of the Lord will come, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the Elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up. Seeing then all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of Persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness; looking for, and hastning*

*hastning unto the coming of the day of God? that is, making speedy preparation for it. The very expectation of this terrible Day of the Lord, at how great a distance soever, should make us diligent, that whenever it shall be, we may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless.*

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But it adds a great deal of Awe and Force to this Argument, to consider, that for ought we know to the contrary, this Judgment may surprize us at any time; that this very night we may be awakened by the sound of that mighty Trumpet, which shall pierce the Ears of all the World, and summon the living and the dead to Judgment. And God, who is the lover of Souls, and desirous to save us any ways, by Hope and by Fear, by his Mercies and by his Corrections, by our Knowledg and by our Ignorance, hath purposely concealed from us the time of his coming to Judgment, to the end we may always be prepared, and that we might continually stand in awe of it; and for fear our Lord should come upon us unawares, might always



always be in a posture to receive him.

And whatever the secure part of Mankind may think, who *put far from them the evil day*, how careless and confident soever they may be, it would for all that be a terrible thing to them, all on the sudden, *to see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with his mighty Angels*; to hear the great Trumpet sound, summoning the Dead to arise and come to Judgment; to see the whole World in a combustion, and the whole frame of Nature ready to dissolve and fall in pieces, *the Sun darkned, and the Moon turned into blood, and all the powers of heaven shaken, the earth and all the works that are therein flaming about us*; to see the Dead starting out of their Graves, some with great Joy, others in a mighty Amazement and Fright, according to their several expectations of a happy or fearful Doom. What a surprise would it be to drowsie and careless Sinners, to be thus suddenly and unexpectedly overtaken? How will the profane Infidel like to find himself

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so terribly confuted by his own Eyes, and forc'd to believe that which will make him tremble? It will then be too late for Men to think to make their Peace with God, and to prepare for Judgment. And if there were any time for it, the Horror and Amazement that Sinners will then be in, will hinder them from doing any thing. Thus the Scripture represents the fearful case of impenitent Sinners, who are thus surprized, as not knowing what to do with themselves, nor whither to fly for safety, as ready to betake themselves any whither for shelter and refuge, as *calling upon the mountains and rocks to fall upon them, and hide them from the face of him that sits upon the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb*; hereby signifying to us, that Sinners shall be in such a consternation, and so deep a despair of the Mercy of God towards them, that instead of addressing themselves to him, they shall turn their Supplications to *the Mountains and Rocks*, as being more exorable than he.

But this possibly may not be our  
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case; this dreadful Day may not come in our days; and yet it is madness to run a venture in a matter of such moment: But if it should not, I must tell you, that the case of a dying Sinner is not much different, who hath neglected God and Religion in his Lifetime, and would never think of betaking himself to him, or making any submission, till his Justice be ready to cut him off. And how secure and careless soever Sinners may be now, no Man knows how soon he may be reduced to the very last Opportunity of making his Peace with God, and may be brought into those sad and miserable straits, that no Man that is in his Wits would be in for all the World; that he may have nothing left that can give him the least hope of being saved from eternal Perdition, but a sudden and confused, and in all probability an ineffectual Repentance; nothing but this one Plank to trust to, which it is ten thousand to one whether it ever bring him to shore.

Therefore be wise, Sinner, in time, and seize upon the present Opportunities



nities of life, and improve them with all thy might, with all possible care and diligence, lest Judgment find thee unprepared; or in case God in mercy to the World should delay it yet longer, lest Death seize upon thee careless and unprovided. And when that is once in view, it is but very little that can be done by way of preparation: for as *there is no counsel nor wisdom, no work nor device in the grave, whither we must go*, so there is very little when we are come near to it; and therefore *blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when he cometh shall find watching.*

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# SERMON XI.

The Certainty, and the Blessed-  
ness of the Resurrection of  
true Christians.

I THESS. IV. 14.

*For if we believe that Jesus died, and  
rose again; even so them also which  
sleep in Jesus, will God bring with  
him.*

**T**HE Words which I have read  
are an Argument of the Blessed  
Resurrection of good Men to eternal  
Life, grounded upon the Resurrection  
of Christ. In the Verse before, the  
Apostle comforts Christians, concern-  
ing their Brethren that were already



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departed in the Faith of Christ, that there was no reason why they should so immoderately grieve for them. *But I would not have you ignorant, Brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others that have no hope; that is, as the Heathen do, who mourn for their dead Friends in so grievous a manner, as if they were utterly extinguish'd by Death, and they had no imagination of any Life beyond this. And thus we find the Apostle elsewhere describing the State of the Heathen World; Eph. 2. 12. that they were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope.*

But Christians should not mourn for their deceased Friends, as the Heathen were wont to do, who had no hope of a better Life; because Christians profess to believe that Christ is risen from the Dead and ascended into Heaven. *For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him.*

There

There are *two* things to be explained in the words, before we come to consider the matter of them.

*First*, What is meant by *those that sleep in Jesus*.

*Secondly*, What by God's *bringing them with him*.

*First*, What is meant by *those that sleep in Jesus*. Sleep is a Metaphor used for Death, by all sorts of Writers profane and sacred; and by the ancient Christians, the place of Burial was called κοιμητήριον, that is, a *sleeping-place*. This Metaphor is sometimes applied to the Death of the Wicked, but most frequently used of the Death of the Righteous; because to them it is truly a Rest. And so the Prophet, speaking of the Death of the Righteous, calls it, *Isa. 57. 2. They shall enter into peace, they shall rest in their beds*.

And the Death of the Righteous is very fitly call'd a *Sleep*, both as it is a  
X 4 rest

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rest from Labour and Pain. *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; for they rest from their labour,* Rev. 14. 13. And likewise because Sleep is not final, but in order to waking again. The Death of the Righteous is not an eternal Sleep of the Body, but that shall be awakened in the Morning of the Resurrection.

But why is the Death of good Men call'd *a sleeping in Jesus*? διὰ 'Iησοῦ, *for Jesus sake*; which may seem to have some particular relation to those who died Martyrs for Christ; as some likewise understand that Text, Rev. 14. 13. *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord*, that is, that suffer for his Cause; *for they rest from their labours*, that is, their Sufferings are then at an end. But we shall best understand the meaning of this Phrase, by comparing it with those others which seem to be equivalent to it, as 1 Cor. 15. 18. *They also that are fallen asleep in Christ*; v. 23. *They that are Christ's at his coming*, that is, they that belong to him, that died in the Faith of Christ. So likewise in this, 2 Thess. 4. 10. *The dead*  
in



*to sleep in Jesus.*

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*in Christ shall rise first*, that is, the Christians that are dead before the coming of Christ, shall first be raised, before those that are alive shall be changed. Heb. 11. 13. *All these died in Faith*, that is, in firm belief of God's Promise of a better Life. So that *to sleep in Christ*, *to be Christ's*, *to die in Christ*, *to die in the Faith*, do all seem to signify the same thing, viz. to die in the State of true Christians. For so we understand the like Expressions of *being in Christ*, Rom. 8. 1. *He that is in Christ*, that is, every sincere Christian; and of *abiding in Christ*, John 15. 4. *He that abideth in me*. So *to die in Christ*, is to die a true Christian, in the Faith and Obedience of the Gospel.

And it is observable, that in the phrase and stile of the New Testament, *We are said to die all in*, and *with Christ*; *to be in him*, and *to live in him*, and *to walk in him*, by our Sanctification and Obedience; *to die with him*, by the mortification of our lusts; *to rise with him*, by our Renovation to a new Life; *to ascend with him into heaven*, and *to have our life hid with Christ*  
in

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*in God, by our heavenly Affections and Hopes ; and by Death to sleep in him.*

But before I pass over this Phrase of *sleeping in Jesus*, there is one difficulty more about the Sleep of the Soul, which seems to be countenanced from this Text, *Those that sleep in Jesus, shall God bring with him*; as if the Apostle spake here of the Souls of good Men which had been asleep, and Christ should bring with him to be united to their Bodies, which should be raised ; as likewise from the whole tenour of the Apostle's discourse about the Resurrection, *1 Cor. 15.* where the Apostle says nothing of the living of the Soul before the Body be raised ; as if the Soul separated from the Body were in a state of insensibility, till the Resurrection. But the true Answer to this is, that neither our Saviour in his Discourse of the Resurrection, nor *St. Paul* in the *15th Chapter to the Corinthians*, nor here in this Text, do keep closely to the proving of the Resurrection of the Body ; but of a blessed Immortality after this Life,

against

*together with the Body.*

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against the Sadduces, who said, *there was no Resurrection, neither Angel nor Spirit.* But sometimes they prove that there is a Life after Death; and sometimes that at the Resurrection, the Soul shall be joined to a spiritual and heavenly Body, and that the whole Man shall enjoy perfect Bliss and Happiness.

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But this Opinion, or rather Dream, concerning the Sleep of the Soul from the time of Death, that is, from the time of the separation of the Soul from the Body till the general Resurrection, may be effectually confuted these *two* ways.

1. By taking away the ground of it.
And,

2. By producing several Texts of Scripture, which are utterly inconsistent with it. And this I shall the rather do, because some men have taken a great deal of pains to establish and prove this Opinion; tho I confess I do not well understand to what end, be-

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because there is as little comfort as truth in it.

1. By taking away the only ground that I know of of this Opinion; and that is, from the frequent Metaphor and Resemblance in Scripture of Death to Sleep. And indeed those which are dead, are frequently in Scripture said *to sleep*, or *to be fallen asleep*: but then (which falls out very cross to this Opinion) this Metaphor of Sleep is no where in Scripture applied to the Soul, but to the Body resting in the Grave, in order to its being awaken'd and raised out of this Sleep at the Resurrection. And thus it is frequently used, with exprefs reference to the Body. *Dan. 12. 2. Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; and surely sleeping in the dust of the earth, can only be applyed to the Body.* And more expresly yet, *Matth. 27. 52. And the graves were opened, and many bodies of Saints which slept, arose.* *Acts 13. 36. David after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell asleep, and was laid to his fathers, and saw corruption: but*

he whom God raised again saw no corruption. Now that of David which fell asleep, and was buried with his fathers, and saw corruption, was certainly his Body; and that of our Saviour which was raised again, and saw no corruption, was likewise his Body, according to that Prediction concerning him, *Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell, in Hades,* by which is plainly meant the State and Place of Souls separated from the Body; nor suffer thy holy One to see corruption, that is, the Body of our Blessed Lord to rot in the Grave. 1 Cor.

15.21. *But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept;* that is, the Resurrection of his Body out of the Grave, is an earnest and assurance that our Bodies also shall be raised. And v. 51. *We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed;* where the Apostle undoubtedly speaks both of the death and change of these corruptible Bodies. And so likewise the Text is to be understood of the Resurrection of the Bodies of the Saints, which shall be raised up by the sound of the great Trumpet, and reunited to their Souls, that they may
in

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in person accompany Christ at his coming. So that it is *the Body*, which is every where said in Scripture to *sleep*, and not *the Soul*; and if so, then the only foundation of this Opinion is taken away.

2. I shall shew, that this Opinion of the Sleep of the Soul is utterly inconsistent with several passages of Scripture, which plainly suppose the contrary; as *Luke 16. 22, 23.* where in the Parable of the rich Man and *Lazarus*, the different States of good and bad Men, immediately after their departure out of this life, are described; but they are so described, that it is evident that the Souls of neither of them are asleep. It is said of *Lazarus*, that *he was carried by the Angels into Abraham's bosom*, and that there *he was comforted*; and of the rich man, that *he was in hell*, and there *tormented in flames*. This was not like to be a state of Sleep and Insensibility, and the rich Man cries out of his Torment; and that we may be sure he was awake, he is said to *lift up his eyes*. And there is all the reason that can be


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be to conclude that *Lazarus* was every whit as sensible of the Comfort and Happiness that he was in, as the rich Man was of his Torment. *Luke* 23. 43. where our Saviour says to the penitent Thief, *This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*: but not surely to sleep there till the Resurrection. Tho some have endeavour'd to avoid the force of this Text, by referring *this day* to what goes before, and not to what follows after; as if our Saviour had said; *I say unto thee this day*; and not, *This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise*: which is a foolish evasion, because, *I say unto thee*, necessarily implies the present time, and there is no need to add, *this day*; besides that there is no such Phrase any where used, as *I say unto thee this day*. *Phil.* 1. 23. *I am in a strait between two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better*. But if to be with Christ, be to be in a state of Sleep and Insensibility, how is that so much better than to be in the body, serving God and his Church? *2 Cor.* 5. 6. *Therefore we are always confident, knowing that while we sojourn in the body,*

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dy, we are absent from the Lord; we are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the Body, and present with the Lord. But certainly, to be present with the Lord, which the Apostle here affirms that good Men are, so soon as they depart out of the Body, must needs signifie a State of Happiness; which *Sleep* is not, but only of Insensibility. Besides that the Apostle's Argument would be very flat, and but a cold encouragement to Christians against the fears of Death, that as soon as we are dead, we shall fall asleep and become insensible. But the Apostle useth it as an Argument, why we should be willing to die as soon as God pleaseth, and the sooner the better; because so soon as ever we quit these Bodies, *we shall be present with the Lord*, that is, shall be admitted to the blif-ful sight and enjoyment of him; and that whilst we *abide in the body*, we are detained from our Happiness. But if our Souls sleep as well as our Bodies, till the general Resurrection, it is all one whether we continue in the Body or not, as to any Happiness we shall enjoy in the mean time; which is

is directly contrary to the main scope of the Apostle's Argument.

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Secondly, What is here meant by God's bringing with him those that sleep in Jesus? In general these words signify a blessed Resurrection, as may be seen by the Opposition; *If we believe that Jesus died, and rose again; even so them also that sleep in Jesus shall God bring with him.* Where to Christ's Death is opposed our sleeping in Jesus; and to his Resurrection, God's bringing us with him; that is, his raising us out of the Grave to accompany him at his coming. But the meaning of this Expression will best appear by considering what follows after the Text. *For this we say by the word of the Lord, that is by special Revelation, that we that are alive, and remain at the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them that are asleep; that is, we shall not be taken up into Heaven, before the Saints who are already dead shall be raised: But thus it shall be, The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and the voice of an Archangel, and with the trump of God, and the*

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dead

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dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. The plain meaning of all which is, that first the dead in Christ shall be raised, and taken up to him in the air, to accompany him at his coming, and thus he shall bring them with him; and then those which are alive at his coming shall be changed and taken up likewise, to meet the Lord in the Air. And the same account the same Apostle gives us, 1 Cor. 15. 51, 52. Behold, says he, I shew you a mystery, (which is the same he had said before in the former Text, *This we say unto you by the word of the Lord*) I shew you a mystery (so he calls that which was not revealed to all by our Saviour, but to himself particularly) *We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed; that is, all shall not die, but at the coming of Christ many shall be found alive and changed; but these shall have no advantage of those who were dead in Christ before; for in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, the dead shall be raised incorruptible; that is, with spiritual*

ritual Bodies which shall be no more liable to Corruption; and we, that is, those that remain then alive, shall also be changed. From all which it appears, that the meaning of this Expression, *Those that sleep in Jesus shall God bring with him*, is this, that the Lord Jesus shall come in the clouds of heaven, in the glory of his Father, and by the sound of the trump of God shall raise the dead in Christ. And our Saviour tells us more particularly, that this shall be done by the Ministry of Angels, *Matth. 24. 30, 31. When the Son of man comes with power and great glory, that the Angels shall with the great sound of the trumpet, gather the elect from the four winds; and when they are thus gathered, God shall bring them with him.*

And here I cannot but observe, that the title of God is given to our Saviour, who is to be Judge of the World. *Them that sleep in Jesus, shall God bring with him.* And elsewhere our Apostle speaking of this glorious appearance and coming of Christ to Judgment, calls him the great God, *Tit. 2. 13. Looking*
Y 2 for

Vol. 9. *for the blessed hope, and glorious appearance of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.* Which cannot be understood of the appearance of two Persons, viz. God the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ our Saviour; for then the Article would have been added to distinguish them, and it would not have been, *καὶ σωτὴρ ἡμῶν*, but *καὶ τὸ σωτὴρ ἡμῶν*, as if he had said, *The appearance of the great God, and of Jesus Christ our Saviour*; whereas according to the Propriety of the Greek, the Article being wanting, it ought to be render'd thus, *Looking for the appearing of Jesus Christ the great God and our Saviour.* This is very much confirmed, in that the same Apostle here in the Text, speaking of Christ's coming to Judgment, calls him *God*; *Them shall God bring with him.*

The Words thus explained, give us this *Observation*, That it is a firm Principle of the Christian Religion, that those who die in the Faith of Christ, that is, in the state of true Christianity, shall have a blessed Resurrection. *If we believe, saith the Apostle,*

postle, that Jesus died, and rose again;  Ser. 11.
 even so ~~them~~ also that sleep in him, shall
 God bring with him. The Apostle to
 the Hebrews reckons the resurrection of
 the dead, among the principles of the
 doctrine of Christ, Heb. 6. 2.

In speaking to this Observation, I
 shall do these three things.

First, I shall shew what it is to
 die in the Faith of Christ, or in the
 state of a true Christian, which is here
 called, *sleeping in Jesus*.

Secondly, I shall shew how the Death
 and Resurrection of Christ are an argu-
 ment and proof of our Resurrection
 from the dead. And,

Thirdly, Wherein the blessedness of
 the Resurrection of the just doth con-
 sist.

First, What it is to die in the Faith
 of Christ, or in the state of a true Chri-
 stian, which is here call'd, *sleeping in*
Jesus. And this imports one of these
 two things; either,

Y 3

1. That

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1. That we die in such a belief of the Doctrine of Christ, as hath been accompanied with a holy Obedience of life to the Commands and Precepts of the Gospel; that our Profession of the Christian Religion hath evidenced it self in the Virtues of a good life, in the constant course and tenour of an holy and unblameable Conversation. This assurance the Christian Religion gives us, that *if wt have our fruit unto holiness, our end shall be everlasting life.*

Or else, 2. That we exercise such a sincere and unfeigned Repentance before death for the Errors and Miscarriages of our lives, as produceth a firm purpose and Resolution of amending our lives, if God should be pleased to prolong and continue them. For only such a belief and profession of the Christian Religion, as produceth one of these Effects, doth put us into a state of Grace, and give us hope of a blessed Resurrection to eternal life.

The

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The *first* of these Effects is much to be prefer'd, *viz.* the general course and tenour of a holy life; the latter being infinitely more hazardous, by reason of the deceitfulness of our hearts, and the infinite uncertainty of a Death-bed Repentance.

Secondly, I shall shew how the Death and Resurrection of Christ are an argument and proof of our Resurrection from the dead. *If we believe, &c.*

I shall shew by and by, how the Resurrection of Christ is an argument and proof of our Resurrection. But why is his Death here mentioned, as part of the argument? *If we believe that Christ died.* The reason is obvious; because the truth of the Miracle of his Resurrection depends upon the reality of his Death; for if Christ was not really dead, then he could not rise from the dead, and the pretence of his Resurrection was a delusion and imposture: but if he was really dead, and rose again from the dead, then have we a firm ground for the

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belief of a future Resurrection. Now this Christians do believe, that Christ was really dead, and rose again from the dead, and that upon very good grounds. We need not doubt but that the malice of the *Jews* took care to kill him ; and the story makes it evident, because Blood and Water came out of his side, which is a certain proof that his Heart was pierced ; and it could not be a *Deliquium*, or a fainting fit, because after his Blood was exhausted, he could not naturally return to life again. But we need not contend much about this, since the Heathen who were unconcern'd confess this. *Tacitus*, in the 15th Book of his *Annals*, tells us, that *Jesus was put to death by crucifixion under Pontius Pilate*. And *Josephus*, who was a Jew both by his Birth and Religion, and lived presently after our Saviour's time, in the 18th Book of his *Jewish Antiquities*, tells us, that *Christ was crucified, and that he appeared to his followers the third day, risen from the dead*.

Now this cannot in reason be said to be done only in appearance, and to

to be a meer illusion of Mens Senses, as some antient Hereticks pretended; because that which may be an evasion in any case, is to be admitted in none. For what greater evidence is possible of any ones rising from the dead, than the circumstances of our Saviour's Resurrection? That there was a great Earthquake, and that the Stone was rolled away from the Grave and the Grave clothes found there, and his Body gone; and that after this he appeared, and conversed so often with so many, to whom he was well known when alive, and entertained long Discourses with them, and did eat and drink with them, and permit them to handle his Body, and to put their fingers into the wound of his side; and all this exactly agreeing with his own Prediction. So that if we believe the Providence of God, we cannot think it to be so little vigilant, as that Men after their utmost care, must necessarily be deluded in a matter of so great consequence.

Now I shall shew, that the Death and Resurrection of Christ is a very good

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good argument of our Resurrection. 1 Cor. 15. 20. *Christ is said to be risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that sleep.* Not that he was the first that was raised from the dead; for *Elijah* and *Elisba* raised some, and so did our Saviour himself in his life time. But the Apostle here alludes to the *first-fruits* among the *Jews*, which were a pledge and earnest of a future Harvest. In like manner the Resurrection of Christ is call'd *the first-fruits of them that slept*, because it is an earnest of that general Harvest, which should be at the end of the World, when *the Angels, the reapers, shall come to gather the elect from the four winds.* But the Resurrection of others before Christ was no earnest of this, because they were raised, but Christ is said to *rise from the dead by his own power.* And in this sense he is truly said by *St. John, Rev. 1. 5.* to be *the first-begotten from the dead.* And this secures our Resurrection to eternal life; because he who hath promised to raise us up, *did raise himself from the dead.*

And

And that Christ intended to lay great stress upon this argument, appears in that he foretold it so often, as the great Sign that he would give to the Jews to convince their Infidelity. John 2. 18, 19. *The Jews said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us? Jesus answered, Destroy this temple, and I will raise it up in three days; speaking of the temple of his body.* And, Matth. 12. 39, 40. he tells the Jews, that he would give them *no other sign, but the sign of the Prophet Jonah, that as he was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so should the Son of man be three days in the bowels of the earth.*

Now the Resurrection of Christ from the dead, and, which was consequent upon it, his Ascension into Heaven, does first give us satisfaction in general of another life after this, and an Immortality after death; and then of his Power to raise us from the dead, because *he raised himself; as the Apostle argues, Rom. 8. 11. If the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised*
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sed up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his spirit which dwelleth in you. And then, lastly it secures us of his truth and fidelity, that he will perform what he hath promised us. He could not have promised any thing more improbable than this, that he himself would rise again the third day; and therefore since he kept his word in this, there is no reason to distrust him in any thing else that he hath promised. By his own Resurrection from the dead he wrought such a Miracle, as is the most proper to confirm us in the belief of our Resurrection to eternal life: Rev. 1. 18. I am he that liveth; and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen, Amen. What is that? We have it explain'd, Rev. 3. 14. where he says of himself, I am the Amen, the faithful and true Witness. This very thing, that Christ was dead, and lives again, makes him the Amen, the true and faithful Witness. I proceed to the

Third and last thing, viz. Wherein the Blessedness of the Resurrection of the

the just shall consist; namely in these 
two things. Ser. II.

I. In the mighty change which shall be made in these vile and mortal bodies of ours, and the glorious qualities they shall then be invested withal. And,

II. In the consequent Happiness of the whole Man, of the Soul and Body united and purified.

I. In the mighty change which shall then be made in these vile and mortal bodies of ours, and the glorious qualities which they shall then be invested withal. But wherein this Glory shall consist, because it is matter of pure Revelation, we must wholly rely upon Scripture for the particular account and explication of it. And there are three Texts of Scripture, wherein this glorious change which shall be made in our Bodies at the Resurrection, is more particularly mentioned and described. The

First

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First is Luke 20. 35, 36. But they who shall be counted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage. This our Saviour speaks, because that which occasioned this discourse concerning the Resurrection, was a question moved by the Sadduces concerning a Woman that had had seven Husbands in her life-time; upon which they captiously ask'd our Saviour, Whose wife of the seven this woman should be at the Resurrection? To which our Saviour answers, by taking away the foundation of it, telling them, that in the other world they neither marry nor are given in marriage. And the reason of this is very obvious; because the reason why Men marry now is, because they are mortal, and therefore to preserve and propagate the kind, which would otherwise fail, Marriage was instituted: but in the other world this reason will cease; because then Men shall be immortal, and die no more. And therefore our Saviour, after he had said, that at the resurrection of the dead, men neither
marry

marry nor are given in marriage, he immediately adds as the reason of it, *neither can they die any more, for they are equal unto the Angels*; that is, they shall be like them in the immortal duration of their Beings; *and are the children of God, being the Children of the resurrection.* Good Men are now the children of God, because they resemble him in the holy disposition of their Minds: but then they shall be like him in the participation of his Happiness, so far as finite and created Beings are capable; the whole Man, the Body as well as the Soul, shall be partakers of Immortality. And this is a glorious change, for a frail and mortal Body, liable to pains and diseases and death, to become immortal, and freed from all those troublesome accidents, to which they are now liable. The

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Second Text to this purpose is, *Phil. 3. 20. But our conversation is in heaven,* says St. Paul, speaking of true and sincere Christians; *But our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall*

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shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working of that mighty power, whereby he is able even to subdue all things to himself. And this is a great change indeed, whether we consider what our Bodies now are; *vile and corruptible*: or the Pattern according to which they shall be changed; *They shall be fashioned like to the glorious body of our blessed Saviour*; that wherein he now sits in the highest Heavens, at the right hand of the Throne of God. And what Glory can we desire beyond that, with which God thought fit to reward his own Son, after all his Obedience and Sufferings? And this will be the more credible, if we consider the relation which the Scripture so often mentions between Christ and all true Christians. He is *the Head*, and they are *the Members*; now there must be a conformity between these. *A glorious Head, and vile Members*, would make a monstrous and irregular Body; nay the Head could not be glorious, if the Members were not so too. Or, *lastly*, if we consider the mighty Power which will be put forth

forth for the effecting this change. The Omnipotency of the Son of God will exert it self in this work. So the Apostle here tells us, that *the Lord Jesus Christ will change our vile body, and fashion it like unto his glorious body, according to the working of that mighty power, whereby he is able even to subdue all things to himself.* Omnipotency will display its whole force in bringing about this change. And what cannot that Almighty Power do, which is able to conquer and subdue all things?

The *Third Text*, and that wherein this change is most fully and particularly described, is 1 Cor. 15. 35. *But some will say, How are the dead raised? and with what bodies do they come?* This was the common Objection which the Infidels made against this Article of the Resurrection: Either Men shall rise with the same Bodies which they had in this life; or they shall not. If with the same Bodies which they had in this life, to what purpose will that be? since in the other World Men shall not eat or drink, or propagate
 Z their

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their kind, and consequently have no use of such a Body as ours now is: But if it be not the same Body, how then are Mens Bodies raised? To this question the Apostle gives a clear Answer; That the Bodies of Men which shall be raised, shall in some respects be the same, and in other respects not the same; the matter and substance of the Body may still be the same, and yet may undergo a mighty change, be fashioned after another manner, and be endowed with quite other qualities than it had before. And this he illustrates by *two* Instances.

1. By the difference between the Corn which is sown, and that which grows up. And,

2. By the difference of several sorts of Bodies, which are all made of the same kind of matter.

1. From the difference between the Corn which is sown, and that which is grown up. V. 36, 37, 38. *Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die, that is, unless it be first buried in the Earth, and rot, and be*
cor.

corrupted there ; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body which shall be ; but bare grain, as of wheat, or some other kind. But bare grain, that is a naked grain, without either stalk or blade or ear. But God giveth it a body, as it hath pleased him, that is, the Author of Nature makes it spring up in a blade, which grows up into a stalk, which bears an ear that contains many grains of Corn ; and to every seed his own Body, that is, a body of the same kind with the Seed that was sown.

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2. The other instance is from the difference of several sorts of Bodies, which are all made of the same kind of matter, put into different forms, some more perfect and glorious, and others less. V. 39, 40, 41. *All flesh is not the same flesh ; but there is one flesh of men, another of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds ; and yet all these are fashioned out of the same kind of matter. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial ; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another ; and the*

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celestial bodies are of a different lustre and glory; *for there is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, and one star differeth from another star in glory.*

And then he applies these instances to the Resurrection, v. 42. *So also is it in the resurrection of the dead.* The matter which was vile before, when it was buried in the Earth, puts on another form, and by the Power of God is raised up a different thing, and far more glorious than when it was put into the earth. V. 42, 43, 44. *It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural or an animal body, it is raised a spiritual body.* I shall briefly explain these several expressions, which represent to us the difference between our Bodies as they now are, and as they shall be at the Resurrection.

It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. Our Bodies, as they are now, are unequally tempered, and
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in a perpetual flux and change, continually tending to corruption, being made of such contrary Principles and Qualities as by their perpetual Confliction do conspire the ruin and dissolution of it. But when they are raised again, they shall be so tempered and refined, as to be free from all these destructive qualities, which threaten a change and dissolution; *they shall be raised incorruptible, so as not to be liable to decay and death.* The Body, tho it continues still material and consists of matter, shall then partake of the Immortality of the Soul to which it is united, and be of equal duration with it. So the Apostle tells us, v. 52, 53. *The dead shall be raised incorruptible; for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*

It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory. Our Bodies when they are committed to the earth are vile offensive Carcases, and therefore we hide and bury them ought of sight: But they shall be raised beautiful and glorious, as different from what they were before,

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fore, as the Heavenly Mansions, in which they are to dwell for ever, are from that dark Cell of the Grave, out of which they are raised; and they that before were only fit company for dust and worms, shall be admitted into the reviving Presence of God, and the blessed society of Angels.

It is sown in weakness, it shall be raised in power. Our Bodies now fall to the ground thro their own frailty, and drop into the Grave thro the weakness and infirmity of Nature to support and bear them up any longer: but tho they fall thro weakness, they shall at the Resurrection be endowed with such a life and strength and vigour, as to be able without any change or decay to abide and continue for ever in the same state.

It is sown a natural body, ψυχικόν, an animal body, an earthly cottage or tabernacle fitted for the Soul to lodge in for a little while: but it is raised a spiritual body. And this is the sum of all the rest. Our Bodies in this World are gross Flesh and Blood, liable

ble to be affected with natural and sensual Pleasures, and to be afflicted with natural Pains and Diseases, to be prest with natural necessities of Hunger and Thirst, and obnoxious to all those Changes and Accidents to which natural things are subject: *But it shall be raised a spiritual body*, pure and refined from the dregs of matter; it shall not hunger nor thirst, be diseased or in pain any more. These *houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust*, are continually decaying, and therefore they stand in need of perpetual reparation by Food and Physick: but *our house which shall be from heaven*, shall be of such lasting and durable matter, as not only Time, but even Eternity it self shall make no impression upon it, or cause the least decay in it. *They who shall be accounted worthy*, says our Saviour, *to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, cannot die any more; but shall be like the angels, and are the children of God*, that is, in some degree shall partake of the Felicity and Immortality of God himself, who is *always the same, and his years fail not*. It is raised

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ed a spiritual body. We shall then be as it were all Spirit, and our very Bodies shall be then so raised and refined, that they shall be no clog, no impediment to the Operations of our Souls. And surely we cannot but think this a glorious change, when we consider how our Bodies do now crush our Spirits, and what a melancholy and dead weight they are upon them, and how grievous an incumbrance and trouble and temptation they are for the most part to us in this mortal state. I proceed now to the

II^d. thing, Wherein the Blessedness of the Just at the Resurrection shall consist, *viz.* in the consequent Happiness of the whole Man, of the Soul and Body united and purified, the one from Sin, the other from Frailty and Corruption; and both admitted to the blessed sight and enjoyment of the ever blessed God. But this is an Argument too big for our narrow Apprehensions of things, whilst we are in this mortal state; a Subject too unweildy for such Children, as the wisest of us
all

all are while we are in this World; and when ever we attempt to speak of it, we do but *speak like children*, and *understand like children*, and reason like Children about it. *That which is imperfect must be done away*; our Souls must be raised to a greater perfection, and our Understandings fill'd with a stronger and steadier light before we can be fit to handle such a Subject, according to the worth and dignity of it. We must first have been in Heaven, and possess of that Felicity and Glory which is there to be enjoyed, before we can think or talk of it, in any measure as it deserves. In the mean time, whenever we set about it we shall find our Faculties oppress'd with the weight and splendour of so vast and glorious an Argument; like *St. Paul*, who when he was caught up into Paradise, saw and heard that, which when he came down into this World again, he was not able to express, and which is not possible for Man to utter.

So that in discoursing of the state of the blessed, we must content our selves

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selves with what the Scripture hath declared in general concerning it, that it is a state of perfect freedom from all those Infirmities and Imperfections, those Evils and Miseries, those Sins and Temptations to which we are liable in this World; a state of unspeakable and endless Joy and Happiness in the blessed sight and presence of God, and in the happy Society of *an innumerable company of Angels, and of the spirits of just men made perfect.*

So St. John describes the Felicities and Glories of that state, as they were represented to him in a Vision, *Rev. 21. 2, 3, 4. And I John saw the holy City, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold the Tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things*

things are passed away; that is, all those evils which we saw and suffer'd in this World, will for ever vanish and disappear. And, v. 23. *And the City had no need of the Sun, neither of the Moon to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.* And which is the greatest Privilege and Felicity of all, no sin shall be there, v. 27. *And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth,* and consequently no Misery and Curse shall be there, Ch. 22. 3, 4. *And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God, and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him, and they shall see his face.* In which last Words, our Employment and our Happiness are exprest; but what in particular these shall be, and wherein they shall consist, it is impossible for us now to describe; it is sufficient to know in general, that our Employment shall be our unspeakable pleasure, and every way suitable to the Glory and Happiness of that state, and as much above the noblest and most delightful Employment of this World, as the Perfection of our Bodies, and the Powers of
our

our Souls shall then be above what they were in this World.

In a word, our Happiness shall be such as is worthy of the great King of the World to bestow upon his faithful Servants, and infinitely beyond the just reward of their best Services; it is to see God, and to be ever with him, in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore.

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SERMON XII.

Of the Happiness of Good Men,
in the future State.

The First Sermon on this Text.

1 JOH. III. 2.

*It doth not yet appear what we shall be ;
but we know, that when he shall ap-
pear, we shall be like him ; for we shall
see him as he is.*

THE great design of this Epistle
is to perswade Men to Purity
and Holiness of life, without which
we can lay no claim to the Promises
and Privileges of the Gospel. Chri-
stians are call'd *the children of God ;*
and

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and this is a great Privilege indeed, a mighty argument of God's Love and Favour to us, to own us for his Children. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. This is the Happiness of our present Condition: *now we are the sons of God; and if sons, then heirs*; this gives us a title to a future Inheritance. And it does not yet appear what we shall be; the circumstances of our future Happiness and Glory are not perfectly revealed to us, only thus much in general is discovered to us, that we shall be very happy, because we shall be admitted to the immediate sight and enjoyment of God; and we cannot see him and enjoy him, unless we be like him; and to be like God, is to be happy. We know that when he shall appear, *ἐὰν φανερωθῇ* that is, when it shall appear. It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but when it shall appear, that is, when our future Happiness shall be revealed to us; it is not yet particularly discovered to us, but thus much in general we know of it beforehand, that we shall be like God, for we shall see him as he is. In which

unknown at present.

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which Words there are these *four*  Ser. 12.
things worthy of our Consideration.

First, The present Obscurity of our future State, as to the particular circumstances of that Happiness which good Men shall enjoy in another World. *It doth not yet appear what we shall be.*

Secondly, That thus much we certainly know of it in general, that it shall consist in the sight and enjoyment of God. *We know that when it shall appear, we shall see him as he is.*

Thirdly, Wherein our likenesses to God shall consist. *We shall be like him.*

Fourthly, The necessary connexion between our likenesses to God, and our sight and enjoyment of him. *We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is; that is, because we shall see him as he is, therefore it is certain we shall be like him; for unless we be like God, we are not capable of seeing and enjoying him.*

First,

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First, The present Obscurity of our future state, as to the particular Circumstances of that Happiness which good Men shall enjoy in another World. *It doth not yet appear what we shall be.* The Scripture tells us, that it is a glory yet to be revealed. That there shall be such a state of Happiness for good Men in another World, tho it was in a great measure obscure to the World before, both to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, yet it is now clearly revealed to us by the appearance of *Jesus Christ*, who hath brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel. But the particular circumstances of this Happiness are still hid from us; and as it is a needless, so it would be a faulty Curiosity in us to pry and enquire into them. It is enough that we certainly know there is such a state; the knowledge of this in general is enough to quicken our Diligence and excite our Endeavours for the obtaining and securing of it; it is enough to mortifie all evil Affections in us, and to baffle all Temptations to sin, to know that it will rob us of so great a felicity,

city, as God hath promised to us ; it is enough to support and comfort us under all the miseries and afflictions of this present time, to be fully assured that after a few days of sorrow and trouble are over, we shall be unspeakably and eternally happy. A firm perswasion of this, is argument enough to our obedience, and a sufficient support to our faith and patience, and we need enquire no farther. Thus much God hath revealed to us for our comfort and encouragment, the rest he hath concealed from us ; and it would be a bold intrusion into his secrets, to pry and search any farther ; and if we should, it would be to no purpose. For in things which depend upon divine Revelation, it is impossible for us to know any more, than God is pleased to reveal to us. In matters of pure Revelation, we cannot go beyond the word of the Lord ; *the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God*, or he to whom the Spirit of God shall reveal them. If one should come from a strange Country, never known and discovered before, and should only tell us in general, that it was a most plea-

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fant and delightful place, and the Inhabitants of it a brave and generous and wealthy People, under the Government of a Wise and Great King, ruling by excellent Laws; and that the particular delights and advantages of it were not to be imagined by any thing he knew in our own Country, and should say no more of it: if we gave credit to the person that brought this Relation, it would create in us a great admiration of the Country described to us, and a mighty concern to see it and live in it: But it would be a vain curiosity to reason and conjecture about the particular conveniences of it; because it would be impossible, by any discourse to arrive at the certain knowledge of any more, than he who only knew it was pleased to tell us. This is the case as to our Heavenly Country. Our blessed Saviour who *came down from Heaven, from the bosom of his father*, hath revealed to us a state of Happiness and Glory in general, that there is such a *Kingdom prepared for us*; and when he was leaving the World he told us, that he was going thither by the way of the Grave; and

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and when he was risen again from the Dead, and was ascended into Heaven, he promised *to come again* at the end of the World, and to raise us out of the Grave, and to carry us into those Celestial Mansions, where *we shall be forever with the Lord*. And beyond this he hath made no particular discovery to us, of the felicity of that place, he hath given us no punctual representation of the glory of it; he hath not declared to us in a special manner, what our work and employment shall be, in what way God will communicate himself to us, nor what kind of Conversation we shall have with the blessed Angels, and with one another, and how far we shall know, or be known to one another; or whether we shall stand affected in any peculiar manner to those, who were our Friends and Relations and Acquaintance in this World. These, and perhaps a thousand things more which may concern the Glories of that State, and the happiness and employment of *the spirits of just men made perfect*, our Saviour hath told us nothing of, but only in general; and it is impossible

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for us with any certainty to make out the rest, any more than Children can make a conjecture of the Designs and Reasonings of a wise Man; not only because it would be of no great use to us, but because the imperfection of human Nature, and of our faculties in this state of mortality, is not able to bear a full and clear representation of so great a glory.

When our Saviour was transfigured upon the Mount, and a little image of Heaven was shewn to men, the Disciples were strangely amazed, and knew not what they said. And St. Paul tells us, that when he was *taken up into the third Heaven*, the things which he saw and heard there, were *not to be uttered*. So that well might the Apostle say here in the Text, *It doth not yet appear what we shall be*. Our future state is very obscure to us, while we are in this World, as to any distinct and particular knowledge of it.

There are a sort of idle men in the World, I mean the Schoolmen, who have been very busie and bold in their enquiries,

enquiries, very peremptory in their determinations of several things relating to it: But after all our search and study, it is impossible for us to advance one step farther in the knowledge of it, than God hath been pleased in his holy Word to reveal it to us. And how much God hath revealed, I shall in discoursing of the

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Second particular consider, namely, that thus much we know of it in general, that it shall consist in the blessed Vision of God. *It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but when it shall appear, we shall see him as he is.* Thus much all Christians know, because our Saviour hath plainly revealed it to them, that the blessedness of the Saints should consist in *the vision of God.* Matth. 5. 8. *Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.* Which the Apostle expresseth with a little variation, *Heb. 12. 14. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.* Here is a great thing exprest to us in a few words, *We shall see him as he is:* for the better understanding of which, it will be

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convenient to enquire into these *three* things.I. What is meant here by *seeing* God.II. What by *seeing him as he is*.

III. The fitness of this Metaphor to exprefs to us the happiness of our future state.

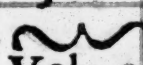
I. What is meant by *seeing* God. The Schoolmen have spun out abundance of fine Cobwebs about this, which in their language they call *the beatifick vision of God*, and they generally describe and explain it so as to render it a very dry and sapless thing. They make it to consist in a perpetual gazing upon God, and contemplating the divine Essence and Perfections, in which as in a clearer Mirrour, they suppose men to see and know all other things. But this is a very jejune and insipid notion of Happiness, but yet suitable enough to the gust and inclination of those that devised it. And indeed

indeed men are naturally apt to form such notions of God and Heaven to themselves, as are most agreeable to their own appetites and inclinations. So the Heathen world framed to themselves Gods after their own Image and Likeness, of like passions and inclinations, and lusts with themselves; and such a Heaven as pleas'd themselves, and was most suitable to their own gross imaginations of pleasure and happiness; and therefore they described it by pleasant Fields, and clear Rivers, and shady Walks. So likewise *Mahomet* framed such a Paradise, as is most agreeable to our sensual Appetites and Lusts. In like manner the Schoolmen, who addicted themselves wholly to contemplation, would have the happiness of Heaven to consist in that which they themselves took most delight in. But surely the Scripture understands something more by *the sight of God*, than a bare contemplation of him. It is a known Rule given by Divines for the understanding of Scripture; "The words that signifie Sense and Knowledge, are very often in Scripture to be so understood as to

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“ comprehend in them those affecti-
 “ ons and effects, which Sense and
 “ Knowledge are apt to produce in us.
 So our Knowledge of God doth in
 Scripture many times import the sum
 of all Religion, the whole Duty of
 Man. *He that saith I know him, and keep-
 eth not his Commandments, is a liar :* and
 God’s knowing of us signifies the whole
 happiness of Man. *The Lord knoweth
 them that are his.* So Tasting and
 Sight are in Scripture put for Experi-
 ence and Enjoyment, *Psal. 34. 8.*
Taste and see that the Lord is gracious.
Lament. 3. 1. I am the man that have
seen affliction, that is that have suffered
it. 1 Pet. 3. 10. He that will love life,
and see good days, that is, enjoy them.
 And so we use the word in common
 speech. To see a friend, is to enjoy
 the pleasure of his company, and all the
 advantages of his conversation. So here
the sight of God doth comprehend and
 take in all the Happiness of our future
 state. As to see the King, includes the
 Court, and all the glorious circumstan-
 ces of his attendance ; so *to see God*, does
 take in all that glory and joy and hap-
 piness which flows from his presence.

I grant indeed, that this expreffion primarily and immediately denotes our perfect knowledge of God in the other Life, in opposition to those obscure and more imperfect discoveries and apprehensions which we have of him in these earthly Bodies. For I think we need make no doubt but that Sight is here taken in a spiritual and intellectual Sense. We are not to dream that we shall see God with our bodily eyes; for being a pure Spirit, he cannot be the object of any corporeal Sense: but we shall have such a sight of him, as a pure Spirit is capable of, we shall see him with the eyes of our minds and understanding. And in this sense, we do in some degree *see God* in this life, by Faith and Knowledge: but it is but *darkly*, and as it were *through a glass* that we see him, as the Apostle expresseth it. But when we come to Heaven, our understandings shall be raised and cleared to such a degree of strength and perfection, that we shall know God after a far more perfect manner, than we are capable of in this state of mortality. And this perfect

Vol. 9.  perfect Knowledge of him, together with the happy Effects of it, those affections which it shall raise in us, and that blessed enjoyment of the chief good which we are not able to express, is that which is call'd *the sight of God*.

II. What is here meant by *seeing God as he is*. *We shall see him as he is*. Now this doth farther and emphatically express our perfect Knowledge and Enjoyment of God.

I. Our perfect Knowledge of him. Not that we are to imagine, that when we come to Heaven, our Understanding can, or shall be raised to such a pitch, as to be able perfectly to comprehend the infinite Nature and Perfections of God: for all created Understanding being naturally finite, we cannot imagine that it can be stretched to the comprehension of what is infinite, as the divine Nature and Perfections are. But our Knowledge shall be advanced and raised to such degrees of Perfection, as a finite and created understanding is capable of.

And

And we may very reasonably conceive, (and indeed the Scripture leads us to it, without and beyond which it is not safe to speak of these things) I say, we may reasonably conceive the Perfection of this Knowledge to consist in these *three* things: in a more *immediate*, and *clear*, and *certain* Knowledge of the Divine Nature and Perfections, than we are capable of in this state of mortality.

(1.) We shall then have an *immediate* Knowledge of God. In this World we see him by the means and help of his Word and Works; we see him as he hath manifested and revealed himself to us in the holy Scriptures, as he hath represented himself to us in the Creatures, as the Apostle tells us, *Rom. 1. 20.* That *his eternal power and godhead are clearly seen by the things that are made.* But thus we do not see God immediately and directly; but by a reflection of his Perfections from the works of Creation and Providence. We see him by faith at a great distance, which the Apostle calls *seeing him as it*

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it were *through a glass*, 1 Cor. 13. 12. Now Faith in Scripture is most frequently opposed to Sight, which is a more immediate view and nearer discovery of a thing, 2 Cor. 5. 7. *We walk by faith and not by sight.* But in Heaven we shall have an immediate and direct sight of God, that which the Scripture calls *seeing him face to face*; not at a distance, as we do now by faith; not by reflection, as we do now see him in the Creatures: but we shall have an immediate and direct view of him. *Faith shall then cease*, as the Apostle tells us, and be perfected in sight, because of the nearness and evidence of the object.

(2.) We shall not only then have an immediate, but a far *clearer* Knowledge of God, than we have now in this life, 1 Cor. 13. 12. *We now see him in a glass darkly*, ἐν ἀνίγμῳ, *in a riddle*, which is an obscure and involved declaration of a thing. We have now but very dark and confused apprehensions, and such as do not only represent him very imperfectly, but many times very falsely to us. While
our

our Souls are muffled in these gross Bodies, we are compast about with Clouds, which do in a great measure intercept the sight of him: But the light of glory will scatter all these Clouds, *The vail shall then be taken away.* The Resurrection will refine our Bodies to that purity, that they shall be fit instruments for our Souls. We shall have spiritual Bodies, as the Apostle tells us, 1 Cor. 15. so purified from all these dregs which now encumber them, that they shall be fit to be united to a Spirit, and to act with it; and then *we shall with open face behold the glory of God*, as the Apostle expresseth it, 2 Cor. 3. 18. or as it is here in the Text, *We shall see him as he is.* We see him now many times *as he is not*; that is, we are liable to false and mistaken conceptions of him: but then *We shall see him as he is.* The clearness of our Knowledge will free us from all error and mistake about him. We are now many times at a loss, what conceptions to have of God; we are hard put to it to reconcile one Perfection of God with another, and to make them consistent

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(3.) We shall then likewise have a *certain* Knowledge of God, free from all doubts concerning him. There may be a certainty in Faith; but not that high degree of evidence and assurance which is in sight. 'Tis spoken by way of abating of the certainty of Faith, when it is called *the evidence of things not seen*. Nay, many times the faith of good men is mix'd with a great deal of fear and doubt of the contrary. But in the state of glory, we shall not be liable to any of these doubtings and jealousies, which do so frequently possess the best of men in this World. Then *We shall know, as also we are known*, as the Apostle expresseth it, 1 Cor. 13. 12. As God now knows us, so shall we then know him, as
to

to see God as he is.

to the Truth and Certainty of our Knowledge.

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Now such an immediate, and clear, and certain Knowledge of God, as hath been described, doth necessarily suppose a very great elevation of our understandings, above what this state of mortality can bear. We cannot now have a clear and immediate sight of God, because the weakness and imperfection of our present state will not admit of it. In this life our understandings are easily overborn by the lustre and excellency of an object. Hence it was that God said to *Moses*, when he so earnestly desired to see his face, *Thou canst not see my face and live*, *Exod. 33. 20.* So transcendent and glorious a sight would quite overwhelm and overcome our faculties; as the light of the Sun, if we look stedfastly and directly upon it, will dazle and blind the strongest eye. The sight of so glorious a Being as God is, of so much Excellency and Happiness and Perfection, as concenter in him, would fill us with joy and wonder, too great for frail mortality to bear;

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bear: but in the state of glory, the Eye of the Soul, that is, our understanding faculty shall be enlarged unto that capacity, and purified to that clearness, and elevated to that strength, as to be able to receive and bear so much of the lustre and glory of the divine Nature and Perfection, as is consistent with the finiteness of a human understanding, and suitable to the Perfection of a glorified Soul; and our understandings shall then be raised and advanced to such a strength, that they shall be so far from being oppressed and burdened with the presence of God, and from sinking under the weight of his glory, that they shall be infinitely ravish'd and delighted with it.

2. *To see God as he is*, does imply our perfect enjoyment of him. We shall not only perfectly know him, but we shall take infinite pleasure in him, in beholding his glory, in praising and admiring his goodness, in doing his will with all imaginable readiness and cheerfulness. I do not pretend to describe to you the particularities of that state, and all the blessed comforts

comforts and enjoyments of it; *It doth not yet appear what we shall be.* God hath not told us, and none but he who is the Author and Fountain of this Happiness, can discover it to us. Let it suffice us, that God hath assured us of it, and hath prepared it for us; and it can be no mean thing which the infinite Wisdom and Goodness and Power of God hath designed for the final reward of those who love him, and of those whom he loves. If we know thus much of it, that it is certain beyond all doubt, and vast beyond all imagination, we have nothing more to wish, but that God would fit us for it, and as soon as he pleaseth, bring us to the enjoyment of it.

III. We will consider the fitness of this Metaphor, to express to us the Happiness of our future State. And that the Scripture doth very much delight to set forth to us the blessedness of Heaven, by this Metaphor of *seeing*, is evident from the frequent use of it in Scripture. Matth. 5. 8. *Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.* 1 Cor. 13. 12. *We shall see him face to face.*

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face. Heb. 12. 14. *Without Holiness no man shall see the Lord.* And here in the Text, *We shall see him as he is* And indeed God is pleased in Scripture, to make sensible descriptions of the Happiness and Misery of another World, and by way of accommodation to our understandings, and condescension to the weakness and imperfection of this State, to set forth Heaven and Hell to us by such things as are sensible; and that not only to help our understandings to a more easie conception of things, but likewise to move and rouse our affections, which while we are in the Body, and immerst in sense, are commonly most powerfully wrought upon, by sensible representations of things. And therefore Hell is described to us by such things as affect the sense of feeling, because that is capable of the greatest and sharpest pain; and the Enjoyments of Heaven, by the sense of sight, because that is the noblest of all our Senses; and the primary and proper Object of it is most delightful, and of the most spiritual Nature of any corporeal thing.

I. Sight

1. Sight is the noblest and most excellent of all our Senses ; and therefore the Frame of the Eye is the most curious of all other parts of the Body, and the dearest to us, and that which we preserve with the greatest tendernefs. When the Apostle would set forth the mighty affection which the *Galatians* bore to him, he says, *They would have plucked out their very eyes for him.* 'Tis the most comprehensive Sense, hath the largest sphere, takes in the most objects, and discerns them at the greatest distance. It can in a moment pass from Earth to Heaven, and survey innumerable objects. It is the most pure, and spiritual, and quickest in its operations, and approacheth nearest to the Nature of a spiritual faculty. Of all our Senses, it carries the greatest evidence and certainty along with it, and the reports of it are the most certain and unquestionable. Hence we use to say, that one Eye-witness is more than ten Ear-witnesses. When *Job* would express to us the most perfect Knowledge of God, he does it by sight, *Job 42. 5. I have*

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heard of thee by the hearing of the ear ; but now my eye sees thee : that is, he had a more perfect and clear discovery of God and his perfections, than ever he had before. And to mention but one thing more ; It is that Sense which is more apt to work upon our affections.

*Segnius irritant animos demissa per aures,
Quàm quæ sunt oculis commissa fidelibus ;*

“ The things which we hear report-
“ ed, are not so apt to move our
“ pity or anger or love, as the things
“ which we see with our Eyes. So
that in all these respects, of the dignity
and excellency, the largeness and com-
prehensiveness, the spirituality and
quickness, the evidence and certainty
of this Sense, and the power it hath
to raise our affections, it is the fittest
to represent to us the noblest employ-
ment and operation of our Souls in the
state of glory.

2. The primary and proper object
of this Sense, is the most delightful,
and of the most spiritual nature of any
corporeal thing, and that is *light*. *The*
light

light of the eye rejoiceth the heart,
 Prov. 15. 30. *Light is sweet, and a*
pleasant thing it is for the eye to behold
the Sun, Eccles. 11. 7. It is the purest
 and most spiritual of all corporeal
 things, and therefore God chuseth to
 represent himself by it. *God is light,*
and in him is no darkness at all.

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 Ser. 12.

And thus I have done with the *Se-*  
*cond* thing I propounded to speak to,  
 namely, That thus much in general we  
 certainly know of the happiness of our  
 future State, That it shall consist in *the*  
*sight of God.* I should now proceed to  
 the *Third* thing, namely, wherein our  
 likeness to God shall consist. But this  
 I shall refer to another opportunity.

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# SERMON XIII.

Of the Happiness of Good Men,  
in the future State.

The Second Sermon on this Text.

1 JO H. III. 2.

*It doth not yet appear what we shall be ;  
but we know, that when he shall ap-  
pear, we shall be like him ; for we shall  
see him as he is.*

**I**N these Words are *Four* things  
worthy of our consideration.

*First,* The present obscurity of our  
future State, as to the particular cir-  
cumstances of that Happiness which  
B b 4 good



Vol. 9. good men shall enjoy in another World. *It doth not yet appear what we shall be.*

*Secondly*, What we know of it in general ; that it shall consist in the perfect Knowledge and Enjoyment of God ; both which are comprehended in that expression, *We shall see him as he is.*

*Thirdly*, Wherein our likeness and conformity to God shall consist. *This we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him.*

*Fourthly*, The necessary connexion between our Likeness and Conformity to God, and our Sight and Enjoyment of him. The two first of these I have spoken to. I shall now proceed to the

*Third*, namely, Wherein our Likeness and Conformity to God shall consist. *We know that when it shall appear, we shall be like him.* In these two things, in the immortality of our Nature, and in the purity of our Souls.

I. In the Immortality of our Nature.

In this mortal state, we are not capable of that Happiness which consists in the Vision of God, that is, in the perfect Knowledge, and perpetual Enjoyment of him. The imperfection of our State, and the weakness of our Faculties, cannot bear the sight of so glorious and resplendent an object, as the divine Nature and Perfections are.

*We cannot see God and live.* The frailty of our mortal condition is unequal to sustain so great a weight of glory; to be sure it is incapable of eternal felicity: nothing but an immortal Nature can be happy for ever. And therefore the Scripture tells us, that when our Bodies shall be raised, the quality and condition of them shall be quite alter'd, and that our blessed Saviour shall by his Almighty Power make a mighty change in them, from what they were in this mortal state, *Phil. 3. 20, 21. Our conversation is in Heaven, from whence also we look for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the*

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*the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things to himself. And the Apostle tells us more particularly, wherein this change doth consist, 1 Cor. 15. 42. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. These corruptible and vile and weak and gross Bodies, which we wear and carry about us for a while, and at last put off and lay down in the Grave, shall by the Power of God at the Resurrection, be refined and advanced into spiritual and vigorous, glorious and immortal Bodies. Our Bodies are now but a Tabernacle, a temporary and moveable dwelling that shall shortly be taken down; but at the Resurrection, they shall become a fix'd and settled habitation, a House that shall never decay nor come to ruine. So the Apostle tells us, 2 Cor. 5. 1. We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens. And when this blessed change shall be made,*

*morta-*



mortality shall be swallowed up of life; for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. And there is a necessity of this, in order to our perfect Happiness. For that is not a perfect Happiness, which shall expire and have an end, which it must have, if we were still liable to mortality. And therefore the Apostle is peremptory, that there must be such a change, because our Bodies as they are now constituted and framed, are utterly incapable of the Happiness of the next life, ver. 50. Now this I say Brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. Where by flesh and blood, the Apostle does not mean, as many have imagined, our sinful and impure Nature; but our frail and mortal Nature, consisting of such gross materials, as flesh and blood are, for the maintenance and support of which, there is continual need of new recruits, and fresh supplies of nourishment by Meat and Drink. Such a Nature as this, which is necessarily mortal, cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, which is a state of perpetual and endless Happiness.

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ness. And that the Apostle means this by the phrase of *flesh and blood*, is evident beyond all doubt, from the next words, which the Apostle adds by way of explication of what he had said, *This I say Brethren, flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.* That which is liable to Death and Corruption, is not capable of Immortal Glory and Happiness. And therefore our Nature must be made Immortal; and Immortality makes us like to God, and is an evident testimony and declaration that we are *the Sons of God.* *We are now the Children of God*, in respect of our title to a future inheritance; but this is hid from the World: but at the Resurrection, when we shall bear the image of his Immortality; this will be an evident mark of our being *the Sons of God.* As our blessed Saviour was mightily declared to be the Son of God, by his resurrection from the dead; so likewise shall his members be declared to be *the Children of God*, by that glorious change that shall be made in them at the Resurrection, when *this mortal*

*in the future State.*

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*mortal shall put on immortality. Then we are the Sons of God indeed in an eminent manner, when we can die no more.*

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And therefore it is worth our observation, that the Scripture gives us the title of *the Children of God*, more especially upon this account, *Luke 20. 35, 36. But they which shall be counted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, can die no more, but are equal to the Angels, and are the Children of God, being the Children of the resurrection.* And *Rom. 8. 19. the Resurrection is call'd, The manifestation of the Sons of God.* And *ver. 21. Our being delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God.* And *ver. 23. it is call'd our Adoption or Sonship; We our selves groan within our selves, waiting for the adoption, viz. the redemption of our bodies.* This is the first thing, wherein our Likeness and Resemblance to God in our future state of Happiness shall consist, The Immortality of our Nature; without which



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which we could not be capable of the blessed Vision of God, and the everlasting Enjoyment of him.

II. It shall consist in the purity of our Souls. Now Purity is a freedom from sin, which is the great stain and defilement of the Soul. Before we can be admitted into Heaven, we must be quit of all those vicious and corrupt inclinations, of all those inordinate desires and passions, which defile our Souls, and render us unlike to God. In this World every good Man does *mortify his earthly and corrupt affections, and in some measure bring them into obedience and subjection to the Law of God.* But still there are some relicks of sin, some spots and imperfections in the holiness of the best men. But upon our entrance into the other World, we shall quite *put off the old man with the affections and lusts thereof, we shall be perfectly delivered from this body of sin and death, and together with this mortal Nature part with all the remainders of sin and corruption, which cleave to this mortal State. For till our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved,*

*dissolved, we shall never be wholly*  
cleansed from the leprosie of sin. While  
we are in this World, we must be con-  
tinually *cleansing our selves from all fil-*  
*thiness of flesh and spirit, and perfecting*  
*holiness in the fear of God:* but we  
shall never be wholly cleansed, we shall  
never be perfectly holy in this life;  
but in the other state, all sin and im-  
perfection shall be done away, and we  
shall be *presented to God, without spot*  
*or wrinkle, or any such thing.* And per-  
fect holiness is the Image of God, and  
the very nearest resemblance of the  
Divine Nature, that Creatures are ca-  
pable of.

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But how our Souls shall be purified  
from those remainders of sin and  
dregs of corruption, which are in the  
best men, while they are in this  
World, it is not necessary that we  
should be able perfectly to explain.  
It ought to be sufficient to us, that he  
who hath promised it, is able to  
do it one way or other; only I am  
confident, and have great reason to  
be so, that this purification will not  
be wrought by the fire of Purgatory.  
For

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For if there be any such thing, as there is not the least spark of divine Revelation for it; (and how any body should come to know it otherwise, is not easie to imagine) it is granted to be a material fire; and if it be so, it is no ways fitted, either for the Punishment or Purgation of impure Souls. Indeed if men carried their Bodies into Purgatory, the fire of it might be a cruel torment and vexation to them: but how a fire should scorch a Spirit, is I believe beyond the Subtilty of a Schoolman to make out; much less is it fitted to purge and take away sin. And if the truth were known, it was never seriously intended for this purpose, to do any good to the dead; but to drain the Purses of the living, by deluding them with a vain hope of getting their Friends delivered out of that imaginarry torment.

But we who take our Faith from the Word of God, and not from the fictions of men, do believe that the Souls of good men do immediately pass out of this World into a state of Happiness,



ness, and that he who bestows this Happiness upon them, does qualifie them for it, before he admit them into it. And if we consider the matter well, we shall find that a Man who hath truly repented of his Sins, and through the Mercy of God in Jesus Christ hath obtained of God the pardon and forgiveness of them, and is firmly resolved against Sin, and doth truly endeavour to mortifie his Lusts, and to lead a holy Life, and by the Grace of God does *deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and lives soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present world*; I say, we shall find that such a Man is *not far from the Kingdom of God*, but very nearly qualified and disposed for it, and that there hardly wants any thing to make such a Man perfectly good, but only to remove out of his way those obstacles and impediments to virtue, and to free him from those circumstances of infirmity and temptation, which do unavoidably encompass us in this World; such as are ignorance, and the instigations of our bodily temper to irregular appetites and passions, that

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which

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which the Apostle calls *the law in our members warring against the law of our minds*; the Necessities of this Life, the Temptations of the Devil and of bad company, and the like, all which do appertain to this state, and which we shall be quit of, so soon as we leave this World, and put off these frail and mortal Bodies; and when these are removed, we are free from the bondage of Sin, and have nothing to hinder and divert that strong bent and inclination of mind, which is in every good Man to do the Will of God. So that our very translation into another state does of it self assert us into this *glorious liberty of the Sons of God*. And if besides this any thing more be necessary to cleanse us from Sin, and perfect the Holiness and Purity of our Souls, we need not be solicitous about the way and manner of it; but may rest confident, that *He who hath begun a good work in us, will perfect it in the day of Christ*; and that what is wanting in our love to God, or charity to Men, in goodness, and meekness, and purity, or any grace or virtue whatsoever, shall then be

*in the future State.*

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be added to them, that so an entrance may be ministred to us abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; like him in the Immortality of our Nature, and in the purity of our Souls, which are the very Image of God, and the most express Character of the Divine Nature. The

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*Fourth and last thing remains, which is to shew the necessary connexion which is between our Likeness and Conformity to God, and our Sight and Enjoyment of him. We know that we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. Which implies, that unless we be like God, we are in no capacity of the blessed sight and enjoyment of him.*

I. Likeness to God in the Immortality of our Nature, is necessary to make us capable of the Happiness of the next Life; which consists in the blessed and perpetual Vision and Enjoyment of God. If our Nature were mortal, we were incapable of seeing God. What was said of Moses, is

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equally



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equally true of all Mankind in this state of Mortality, *We cannot see the face of God and live.* Nothing that is frail and dying can endure the splendor of so great a glory; nothing that stands in need of continual reparation, as *flesh and blood* does, can *inherit the Kingdom of God*; nothing but a fixt and immutable Nature, which can never decay, is capable of everlasting Happiness.

But this part of Likeness and Conformity to God, tho it be necessary to make us capable of the felicity of another World, yet it is no part of our duty and care: if we endeavour after the other, which consists in Holiness and Purity, God will work this in us, and for us, without any concurrence of ours. All that he requires of us, is, that we firmly believe it, and patiently expect it, and fervently pray for it, and aspire after it. And indeed our Likeness to God in this respect, depends upon our Conformity to him in Purity and Holiness. For as *by sin death entred into the world, and so death passed upon all men:* So nothing

*in order to seeing him.*

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thing but Holiness can restore us to Immortality.

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The Foundation of all our hopes of a blessed Immortality, is to be laid in the price of our Redemption, as the Meritorious Cause of it; and in our being *renewed after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness*, as the proper qualification and capacity for it on our parts. We must *have our fruit unto holiness*, if we look that *the end should be everlasting Life*. And to this purpose it is excellently said in the *Wisdom of Solomon*, *The keeping of God's Commandments is the assurance of immortality, and immortality makes us like to God*. And therefore I shall mainly apply my self to the

II. Thing, namely, To shew that our likeness to God in the purity of our Souls is necessary, to make us capable of the blessed Sight and Enjoyment of him in the next life. It is necessary as a Condition of the thing; and it is necessary as a Qualification in the Person.

Cc 3

I. It

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1. It is necessary as a Condition of the thing to be performed on our part, before we can expect that God should make good the Promise of eternal Life and Happiness to us. The express constitution and appointment of God hath made it necessary, who hath told us, *Without holiness no Man shall see him*; that if we sow to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption; but if we sow to the spirit, that is, if we be sanctified and renewed, we shall of the spirit reap everlasting life.

And if this were a mere arbitrary condition, imposed upon us by the Sovereign Will of God, without any necessity from the nature of the thing, yet we ought to accept it, as a very easie Condition; when he hath only said, as the Prophet did to *Naaman, Wash and be clean*. Certainly no Man can refuse so great a Benefit and Blessing conferred upon such cheap and tolerable terms. God hath promised us eternal Life; a mighty Blessing indeed! for the obtaining of which, no condition that is possible can be thought



thought hard and unreasonable. And what does he require of us for the obtaining of it? But that we *cleanse our selves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and perfect holiness in the fear of God*; that is, that we do with all care and diligence abstain from Sin, and endeavour to live a holy Life; to conform our selves to the Will of God, and to be obedient to his Laws. He does not require perfect Holiness of us in this life, but a sincere endeavour after it, and he hath promised to assist our endeavour; and if we go as far as we can, he will perfect what is wanting. So that there is nothing in all this, but what is very possible for every Man to do, by the assistance of that grace which he hath promised to afford to us; and if it be possible, we cannot answer our neglect of it, when all our hopes of Happiness depend upon it. But this is not all, there is yet

2. A farther necessity of it, inwardly to qualifie and dispose us for the Sight and Enjoyment of God. We cannot possibly love God, nor take  
C c 4                      delight

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delight in him, unless we be like him in the temper and disposition of our Minds. If we would know what will make us happy, we must look upon the great Pattern of Happiness, and that is God himself, who as he is the most Powerful, and Wise, and every way Perfect, so is he the happiest Being in the World. So that if we would be happy, we must be like God. We cannot be so perfect as he is, and therefore we cannot be so happy; but if we would be as happy, as Creatures are capable of being, we must endeavour to be as like God, as it is possible for Creatures to be.

We must resemble him as near as we can, in those Perfections wherein he is imitable by us. And these are, as I may call them, the moral Perfections of his Nature, which the Scripture usually comprehends under the name of *Holiness*; his Goodness, and Patience, and Mercy, and Justice, and Truth, and Faithfulness; and these as they are the great glory, so the chief felicity of the Divine Nature.

Good-

*in order to seeing him.*

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Goodness is a Perfection of it self, tho it were without any great degree of Knowledg or Power. A poor Man, and one that is ignorant in comparison of others, may yet be a very good Man. But Power and Knowledg separated from Goodness, are not Perfections, but may be applied to the worst and most mischievous purposes; as we see in the Devil, who hath both these qualities in a high degree.

If we could suppose an omnipotent and all-knowing Being that were destitute of Goodness, he would not only be troublesome to others, but uneasy to himself. Without Goodness there can be no Happiness. So that those Perfections which contribute most to the Happiness of the Divine Nature, are the easiest to be imitated by us. We may be like God in his Holiness, that is, in his Goodness, and Patience, and Mercy, and Righteousness, and Truth. And these Perfections are the very temper and disposition of Happiness; for they are the Nature of God, who is therefore essentially happy,



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py, because he is a Being constituted of these Perfections. And so far as we imitate God in these, we are *Partakers of a Divine Nature; we dwell in God, and God in us.* So our Apostle tells us in the 4th Chapter, Verse 16. *God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.* These Divine Qualities make us fit company for our Heavenly Father, and capable of the Joys of Heaven, and the delights of that glorious place.

And the contrary temper and disposition is the nature of the Devil; and the very thing which makes it impossible for him to be happy. Malice, and Envy, and Revenge, are unquiet Passions, and in what nature soever they are, they are as vexatious and tormentful to it self, as they are troublesome and mischievous to others. These are a Hell within us, and are as natural Causes of misery, as Bodily Diseases are of pain and restlessness; and while these Furies are in us, nothing without us can make us happy.

The Capacity and Foundation of all felicity

felicity must be laid in the inward frame of our Minds, in a Godlike temper and disposition. Till the Image of his Holiness and Goodness, which hath been defaced by Sin, be renewed upon our Minds, we are utterly incapable of the Enjoyment of the first and chief Good, in which all our felicity does consist.

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And thus you see what a necessary connexion there is between our Likeness and Conformity to God, and the blessed Vision and Enjoyment of him. All that now remains, is to draw some Inferences from what hath been discoursed upon this Argument, and so I shall conclude.

I. This shews us, how impossible it is to reconcile a wicked Life with the hopes of Heaven. The terms of our Happiness are firmly and immutably fixt, like *the Foundation of the Earth*, which *cannot be moved*; nay sooner may *Heaven and Earth pass away*, than a wicked Man enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. If we continue in a sinful and impenitent state, we must necessarily

*come*

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*come short of the glory of God.* And therefore all those devices which Men have found out, to excuse themselves from a holy Life, and yet to maintain hopes of getting to Heaven at last, are but foolish arts of security, and tricks to undo our selves quietly and without any great disturbance. Some think to be saved by an external profession of Religion, tho it have no force and efficacy upon their Lives; some by being of the only true Church, wherein Salvation is to be had: And yet if it were true, that there were any one Party or Community of Christians, out of which there were no Salvation, I am sure this likewise is true, that there is no Church wherein a wicked Man can be saved.

Others rely upon Absolutions and Indulgences, and hope, notwithstanding all the unrighteousness and ungodliness of their Lives, to do their business at last that way. But can any Man be so foolish, as to think that any Church or Priest can forgive a Man upon other terms, than those  
upon



upon which only God hath declared he will forgive Sinners?

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Others hope to be saved by the Righteousness of Christ, without any of their own. But what a presumption is this, to think that any think that Christ hath done for us, will avail us, while we cherish our Lusts, and live in the contempt of his Laws? *Let no man deceive you; he that doth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.* The Righteousness of Christ shall never be imputed to any for their Justification, but those who are *sanctified by the renewing of the Holy Ghost.*

So that nothing can be vainer than a wicked Man's hopes of Heaven. The whole design of the Gospel is, to convince Men that Blessedness belongs only to the Righteous, and that no Man that allows himself in any wickedness and impiety of Life, shall have any *Inheritance in the Kingdom of God and Christ.*

II. The consideration of the indispensable necessity of our Likeness and Confor-

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Conformity to God in Holiness and Purity, to make us capable of the Happiness of the next Life, calls loudly upon us, to endeavour after it in this Life. So it follows in the words immediately after the Text, *We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is; and every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure.* 'Tis true indeed, nothing but perfect Holiness makes us capable of the Enjoyment of God, and we cannot be perfectly holy in this Life. But then we are to consider, that if we do not purifie our selves in some measure in this World, if we do not begin this work here, it will never be perfected hereafter; such Dispositions as we carry with us out of this World, stick by us for ever. Indeed if they be good, the degree of them shall be perfected: but if they be bad, they shall never be alter'd. If *the Image of God be renewed upon us* in this life, *We shall be changed from glory to glory, in the other, by the Spirit of the Lord.* But if we be utterly unlike God when we die, Death will make no change in us for the better; we shall go to our place, and inhe-

*rit the portion of Sinners.* We did not endeavour to be like God, and therefore we can never be admitted to the blessed Sight and Enjoyment of him; for there is a direct and eternal opposition between the holy Nature of God, and an impure Creature; and till this opposition be removed, we can have no Communion with him. And 'tis too late to take away this opposition between God and an impure Soul in the other World; because our condition is then concluded, and we shall remain for ever such as we have made our selves, while we were in this World.

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Ser. 13.

Now is the time, *This is the day of Salvation.* Now we may repent and leave our Sins, and purify our selves; and by purity make our selves like to God, and by our likeness to him render our Souls capable of being admitted to the blessed sight of him, *in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for ever more.*

So that we ought to resolve upon one of these two things, either to give  
over



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over all thoughts of Happiness in another World; or to qualifie our selves for it, by *purifying our selves, as God is pure*; for till we are like God, we are not capable of enjoying him. While we live *in ungodliness and worldly lusts*, we are as unlike God as is possible; and there are but two ways imaginable, whereby to bring a Conformity and Likeness between God and us, either by changing God or our selves. Now the Nature of God is fixt and immutable, he cannot recede from his holy Nature; therefore we must leave our Sins. 'Tis certain we cannot change God; therefore we must endeavour to change our selves. Rather think of purifying thy corrupt Nature, which may be done; than of making any alteration in God, *with whom is no variableness, nor shadow of turning.*

Once God hath condescended so far, as to take our Nature upon him, to bring us to a participation of his own Divine Nature, and make us capable of Happiness: but if this will not do, we must not expect that God will put off his own Nature to make us happy.

S E R.

# SERMON XIV.

Preach'd at *White-Hall*, 1686.

The Wisdom of Religion justified,  
in the different ends of good  
and bad Men.

PROV. XIV. 32.

*The wicked is driven away in his wicked-  
ness: but the righteous hath hope in  
his death.*

**S**olomon, all along this Book of the  
Proverbs, doth recommend to us  
Religion and the fear of God, by the  
Name, and under the Notion of *Wif-  
dom*. Chap. 1. 7. *The fear of the Lord,  
is the beginning of Knowledg.* Chap. 9.

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10. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom; and the knowledge of the holy, is understanding.* Hereby signifying to us, that Religion is the fundamental principle of Wisdom, by which our whole Life, and all the actions of it, ought to be conducted and governed; and that all Wisdom which doth not begin here, and lay Religion for a foundation, and which doth not act upon supposition of the Truth of the Principles of Religion, viz. the belief of a God, and his Providence, of the Immortality of our Souls, and the Rewards and Punishments of another life, is but *Wisdom falsely so called*; because it is preposterous, and begins at the wrong end, and proceeds upon a false supposition, and wrong Scheme of things; and consequently our whole Life, and all the actions and designs of it, do run upon a perpetual mistake, and false statings of our own Case; and whatever we do pursuant to this mistake, is foolish in it self, and will be fatal in the issue and consequence of it.

For he that takes it for granted, that there



there is no God, and that the World is not governed by the Providence of any Superiour Being, but by chance; that his Soul dies with his Body, and that there is no life after this; he that proceeds upon these Principles, is free from all fetters and obligations of Conscience, and hath no reason to regard any rule of Right and Justice, or Virtue and Goodness, farther than they conduce to his own ease and pleasure, his convenience and safety in this World; he hath nothing to do, but to contrive his own present Happiness, and to live as long as he can; and because he knows he must die, to compose himself to undergo it as contentedly, and to bear the pain of it as chearfully and patiently, and to act this last part as decently as he can, being secured by his own Principles against all future misery and danger, because Death makes an utter end of him.

This is a very consistent Theory, and hath but one fault, that it is not true at the bottom, and will fail us when we come to lay our whole weight

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upon it. It is just as the Prophet describes *The staff of the broken reed of Egypt, whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand and pierce it.* Such are the Principles of Infidelity, to all that trust in them; when they should stand us in most stead, and when we come to lean hard upon them, they will not only fail us, but go into our very Heart, and pierce it with sharp pain and anguish. In the days of our health and prosperity, the Spirit of a Man may bear up it self by its own natural force and strength; and false Principles are like Anticks in a building, which seem to crouch under the weight of an Arch, as if they bore it up, when in truth they are born up by it. But when these Men fall into any great calamity, or Death makes towards them in good earnest, then is the trial of these Principles, of what strength they are, and what weight they will bear; and we commonly see, that they do not only fail those who trust in them, but they vanish and disappear like dreams and mere illusions of the imagination, when a Man awakes out of sleep; and the Man that was born up by them before

fore with so much confidence, can now feel no substance and reality in them; he cannot now be an Atheist if he would; but God and the other World begin to be as great realities to him, as if they were present to his bodily Eye. And now the Principles of Infidelity are so far from ministring any comfort and good hopes to him, that they fill him with horror and anguish and despair; and are so far from quieting his mind, that there is nothing but Storm and Tempest there. *The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death.* The wicked, that is, the Sinner, the hardned and impenitent Sinner, *is driven away*; which may either signifie the sudden and violent end many times of bad Men, they are carried away as it were by a Tempest, answerable to that expression, *Prov. 10. 25. As the whirlwind passeth, so the wicked is no more*: or else the word may signifie, to be cast down and dejected; and then it imports that trouble and despondency of mind, that anguish and despair, which ariseth from the guilt of a wicked life. *Is driven away in his*



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wickedness; the word in the Original is, *in his evil*, which may either refer to the evil of Sin, or of Affliction and Calamity, and it will come much to one in which sense we take it. According to the first sense of the word *Evil*, the meaning will be, that the Sinner when he comes to die, is in great trouble, and despondency of mind, because of his wicked Life; hath no comfort, no good hopes concerning his future state, according to that other saying of Solomon, Prov. 11. 23. *The expectation of the wicked is wrath.* If we take the word *Evil* in the latter Sense, for the evil of Affliction and Calamity, then the meaning is, that bad Men when they fall into any great Evil and Calamity, more especially upon the approach of Death, (for that, as the last and greatest of Evils, is probably intended, as appears by the opposition in the next words, *The righteous hath hope in his death*) I say, that bad Men, when they fall into any great Evil or Calamity, especially upon the approach of Death, are full of trouble and disquiet, by reason of their guilt, and destitute of all comfort and hope in

in that needful time. And this is most agreeable to the opposite part of this Proverb or Sentence, *But the righteous hath hope in his death*; that is, the good Man, when any Evil and Calamity overtakes him, tho it be the most terrible of all, Death it self, is full of peace and comfort and good hopes; when there is nothing but storms without, all is calm within, he hath something which still supports him and bears him up.

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So that *Solomon* in this Sentence or Proverb, seems to design to recommend Religion and Virtue to us, from the consideration of the different ends of good and bad Men, so obvious to common observation, and generally speaking, and for the most part, which (as I have often observed) is all the Truth, that is to be expected in Moral and Proverbial Speeches; that for the most part, the end of good Men, is full of Peace and comfort, and good hopes of their future condition: but the end of bad Men quite contrary, full of anguish and trouble, of horror and despair, without peace or comfort, or

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wickedness; the word in the Original is, *in his evil*, which may either refer to the evil of Sin, or of Affliction and Calamity, and it will come much to one in which sense we take it. According to the first sense of the word *Evil*, the meaning will be, that the Sinner when he comes to die, is in great trouble, and despondency of mind, because of his wicked Life; hath no comfort, no good hopes concerning his future state, according to that other saying of Solomon, Prov. 11. 23. *The expectation of the wicked is wrath.* If we take the word *Evil* in the latter Sense, for the evil of Affliction and Calamity, then the meaning is, that bad Men when they fall into any great Evil and Calamity, more especially upon the approach of Death, (for that, as the last and greatest of Evils, is probably intended, as appears by the opposition in the next words, *The righteous hath hope in his death*) I say, that bad Men, when they fall into any great Evil or Calamity, especially upon the approach of Death, are full of trouble and disquiet, by reason of their guilt, and destitute of all comfort and hope in



in that needful time. And this is most agreeable to the opposite part of this Proverb or Sentence, *But the righteous hath hope in his death*; that is, the good Man, when any Evil and Calamity overtakes him, tho it be the most terrible of all, Death it self, is full of peace and comfort and good hopes; when there is nothing but storms without, all is calm within, he hath something which still supports him and bears him up.

So that *Solomon* in this Sentence or Proverb, seems to design to recommend Religion and Virtue to us, from the consideration of the different ends of good and bad Men, so obvious to common observation, and generally speaking, and for the most part, which (as I have often observed) is all the Truth, that is to be expected in Moral and Proverbial Speeches; that for the most part, the end of good Men, is full of Peace and comfort, and good hopes of their future condition: but the end of bad Men quite contrary, full of anguish and trouble, of horror and despair, without peace or comfort, or

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hope of any good to befall them afterwards. The Righteous Man hath great peace and serenity in his mind at that time; is not only contented, but glad to die; does not only submit and yield to it, but desires it, as much better. And so some read the words, *The righteous desires or hopes to die*: but the wicked Man and the Sinner dreads the thoughts and approaches of Death, quits Life with great reluctancy, clings to it, and hangs upon it as long as he can, and is not without great violence parted from it. The good Man goes out of the World willingly and contentedly: but the wicked is *driven away*, not without great force and constraint, with much reluctancy, and in great trouble and perplexity of mind, what will become of him for ever.

You see the meaning of the words, that they contain a great Truth, and very well worthy of our most attentive regard and consideration; because, if this be generally and for the most part true, which *Solomon* here asserts, then this is a mighty testimony on the behalf of Piety and Virtue, and plainly

ly shews, that the Principles of Religion and Virtue are proof against all assaults to which human Nature is liable; and that the Principles of Infidelity and Vice do shrink and give back when it comes to the Trial. And this to any wise and considerate Man, is as good as a demonstration, that the Religious Man is in the right, and proceeds upon Principles of sound and true Wisdom, and *hath chosen the better part*: but that the Infidel and the wicked Man is in the wrong, and under a fatal mistake, which he seldom discerns, till it be too late to rectifie it.

Now in the handling of this Argument, I shall do these *three* things.

*First*, I shall shew that this Observation of *Solomon*, concerning the different end of good and bad Men, and the final issue and event of a Virtuous and Vicious course of life, is generally true, and that the exceptions on either side to the contrary are but few, and not of force to infringe the truth of the Observation.

*Secondly*,



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*Secondly*, I shall consider whence this difference proceeds, and I shall endeavour to shew that it is founded in the true Nature and Reason of Things. And

*Thirdly*, That if this be true, it is a demonstration on the side of Religion, and does fully justify the Wisdom of it.

*First*, I shall endeavour to shew, that this Observation of *Solomon*, concerning the different End of good and bad Men, and the final issue and event of a Virtuous and Vicious course of Life, is generally found true, and that the exceptions on either side to the contrary are but few in comparison, and by no means of sufficient force to infringe the general Truth of this Observation; I say, that this Observation of the wise Man, is generally and for the most part true, which (as I mentioned before) is all the Truth that is to be expected, in moral and proverbial Sentences. And for this I appeal to the common and daily experience of Mankind, whether we do not generally

rally see religious and good Men to have great ease and comfort, and sometimes great joy and transport in their minds, from the reflection upon an Innocent and Useful, an Holy and Virtuous course of Life. *David* was so confident of this, that he appeals to common Observation and Experience for the Truth of it, *Psal. 37. 37. Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace.* Or as this Text is rendred in our old Translation, *Keep innocency, take heed to the thing that is right; for that shall bring a man peace at the last.* And he gives the Reason of this, *ver. 39. because God stands by them to support them in this needful time, with the comfortable hopes of his Salvation, The Salvation of the righteous is of the Lord, he is their help in the time of trouble.* As they have sincerely endeavoured to serve God, so they have great hopes and confidence of his Mercy and Goodness to them, that he will stand by them, and support them in their greatest distress, and guide and conduct them to Happiness at the last; and in this confidence they can say with *David, Psal. 16. 8,*

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9, 11. I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For Thou wilt shew me the path of life; in thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. And Psal. 31. 5. Into thy hand I commit my spirit, O Lord God of truth. And Psal. 48. 14. This God is our God for ever and ever, he will be our guide even unto death. And again, Psal. 73. 23, 24, 25, 26. Nevertheless, I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in Heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. Thus a good Man not only in the contemplation of Death, and upon the approach of it, but even under the very pangs of it, is apt to comfort himself in the Divine Mercy and Goodness, and to rejoice in the hopes of the glory of God.

But

But the wicked on the contrary, when Death makes its approach towards them, the guilt of their wicked Lives flies in their faces, and disturbs their minds, and fills them with horror and amazement, with a fearful expectation of Judgment, and fiery indignation to consume them. The expectation of the wicked is wrath, saith Solomon, Prov. 11. 23. *What is the hope of the hypocrite, that is, of the wicked Man, when God shall take away his Soul?* Job 27. 8. In their life time they neglected God and Religion, and perhaps denied him, or said unto him with those in the 21st Chap. ver. 14. *Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledg of thy ways;* and when they come to die, they find that God is departed from them. They have not the confidence to look up to him, or to expect any mercy or favour from him, being conscious to themselves, that they have denied the God which is above, or at least neglected and despised him; and now the terrors of the Almighty take hold of them, and his arrows stick fast in them, and wound their Consciences and they cannot pluck them

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them out, or get rid of them; their Spirits are ready to sink within them, and the Principles of Infidelity which they once relied upon, now fail them, and instead of ministring any comfort and confidence to them, they pierce them to the Heart, and are the greatest ground of their trouble and despair.

So that here is a very visible and remarkable difference between good and bad Men when they come to die. Good Men have commonly a great Calm and Serenity in their Minds, are full of good hopes of the Mercy and Favour of God to them, and of the Sense of *his loving kindness, which is better than life it self*; and are willing to leave this World, in a comfortable expectation and assurance of a better condition after death; and not only willing, but many times heartily glad, that they are going out of this *vale of tears*, out of this sink of Sin and Sorrows, that they are quitting these drooping Mansions, and exchanging these *earthly tabernacles*, for a *building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal*

nal in the Heavens: whereas the wicked is full of trouble and anguish, and his Mind in greater pain and disorder than his Body; all Storm and Tempest, like the troubled Sea, when it cannot rest; there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked. And how can there be peace, when his Whoredoms and Adulteries, his repeated acts of Drunkenness and Intemperance, his profane Oaths and Blasphemies, have been so many? when he is conscious to himself what a life he hath led, and is thoroughly awakened to a just Sense of the evil of his doings? And when Death makes up to him, how does he dread the sight and thoughts of it, and how does he hanker after Life, as if all his happiness depended upon it, and ended with it? and at last, like the young Man in the Gospel, he goes away sorrowful, because, perhaps, he had great possessions in this World, and hath no hopes at all in the other. This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed to him by God.

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There are I confess some Exceptions to the contrary on both sides; but they

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they are but few in comparison, and by no means sufficient to infringe the general Truth of this Observation.

On the one hand, some good Men are very melancholy and dispirited, when they come to die, and leave the World full of fears and jealousies concerning their future condition; and this may proceed from several Causes. Perhaps they are naturally of a dark and melancholy temper, which is usually heightened and encreased by bodily weakness and distemper; and in this case it is no wonder, if the considerations of Religion be not sufficient to scatter these Clouds, and to over-rule and correct the irregularities of our bodily temper; because the Principles and Considerations of Religion do not work naturally and by way of Physick, but morally and by way of Conviction and Counsel. Sometimes this fear and dejection of Mind in good Men, proceeds from mere lowness and faintness of Spirit, naturally caused by the load and continuance of the distemper which they labour under, and by which

which the Mind is likewise in some degree weakened and broken; and when this happens, it is usually very visible, and consequently the account of it easie and obvious; and sometimes perhaps we are charitably mistaken in our good Man, and either he is not a sincerely good Man, or not so good as we took him to be; perhaps his Life hath been very unequal, and full of great failings: and in either case, it is no wonder, if the Man have not that Peace and Comfort, which is answerable to our good opinion of him; if the Man be not sincerely good, there is no real foundation of Peace and Comfort; for *the hope of the hypocrite shall perish: Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be as a spiders web. He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand; he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure,* as one of Job's Friends speaks, Job 8. 14, 15. And Verse 20. *Behold, God will not cast away a perfect, or sincere man; neither will he help, or support, the evil doers.* Or tho he have been in the main a good Man, yet perhaps with a great mixture of Imperfection, and many great failings and neglects; and then it is no wonder, if his Mind

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be not so calm, and clear of doubts and jealousies concerning his condition: for proportionably to the breaches and inequalities of our Obedience, and our more and greater failings, will our Peace and Comfort, living and dying, be naturally abated and interrupted. But these cases are not many, it is sufficient that it is generally otherwise with good men, and that their End is Peace. And this is so remarkable, that *Balaam*, when he was reckoning up the Blessings and Privileges of the People of *Israel*, the Type of good Men in all Ages, he takes particular notice of their happy End, as a most signal and invaluable Blessing; which made him break out into that wish, *Numb. 23. 10. Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.*

And on the other hand, it cannot be denied, but that some very bad men, (as bad as we can well imagine) have past out of this World, not only quiet and undisturbed, but with a great deal of Courage and Resolution. And this I believe in fact and experience, at least according to my best Observation, is the more rare case of the two; for a
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notorious bad Man to die in perfect Peace, than for a good Man to die in great trouble and perplexity of Mind. But this when it happens, may probably enough be ascribed to one or more of these Causes, either to the mistake of the by-standers, who take Silence for Peace; and because the Man is of a strong resolution, and hath a good command of himself, and does not think fit to trouble others, in a matter in which he thinks they can give him no comfort and relief; they interpret this to be Tranquillity of Mind: because he holds his peace and says nothing, they think he hath peace, and that all is quiet within. But I remember the Observation of a very wise Historian, *Phil. Comines*, who says, that he knew in his time several great Persons, who in ordinary Conversation, and to a superficial view, seemed to be very happy and contented, but yet to them who knew them more intimately, and in their private freedoms and recesses, were the most miserable and discontented Persons in the World. This I confess is very rare, for men to conceal a very great trouble, and more yet for a Man to dissemble when dying;

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and yet there is reason to believe it sometimes happens.

Sometimes the quiet death of a very bad Man, proceeds from stupidity, and want of a just sense of the danger of his Condition, and this from want of Discipline and Instruction in the Nature and Principles of Religion: this temper looks like Courage, because it is fearless of danger; but this fearlessness is founded in great ignorance and want of apprehension, whereas a true Courage discerns the danger, and yet thinks it fit and reasonable to venture upon it. Now this stupidity of dying men, who have lived very ill, is commonly the case of such as have been brought up in great ignorance, and have lived in great sensuality, by which means their Spirits are immers'd, and even stifled in carnality and sense; and no wonder, if they who live like Beasts, die after the same manner. And thus our Saviour represents the Rich Glutton in the Parable, as never coming to himself, and a sense of his condition, till he was awakened by the flames of Hell; *Luke 16.22,23. The rich man also died, and was buried, and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torment.*

does not always appear.

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torment. As if he had never been awakened till then, his voluptuous and sensual course of Life rendring him insensible of another World.

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Or else this false Peace may be ascribed to the delusion of false Principles, by virtue whereof it is often seen, that men die in a very bad Cause, not only without any regret and trouble, but with chearfulness and satisfaction; and this is not to be wondred at, because every Man's Conscience is a kind of God to him; and whether a Man be in the right or wrong, so long as he thinks he does well, *and his heart condemns him not*, he is apt to have confidence towards God; but for all that, it greatly concerns every Man to take great care to inform his Conscience. For if men will not be impartial in their enquiry after Truth, and be not ready to receive it in the love of it, St. Paul tells us, *That for this very cause, God may send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lie, and that they might be damned, because they believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness*, 2 Theff. 2. 10, 11, 12: that is, in falshood and imposture: for so the word *ἀδινεία*, which is here

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rendred *unrighteousness*, is sometimes used in the New Testament.

And this is the last Cause I shall mention, to which the false peace of wicked men, when they come to die, is to be ascribed, *viz.* to the just Judgment of God, who permits great sinners to be so hardened in an evil course, as neither living nor dying, to be awakened to a sense of their condition; such as the Apostle speaks of, *1 Tim. 4. 2.* who are said to have *their Consciences seared, as it were, with a hot iron.* This, it is to be hoped, is but the case of a few, that are thus utterly forsaken of God, and left to perish in their own hardness and obstinacy. This is like a Gangreen in the Body, which mortifies the part, and leaves it without sense, and thereby incapable of recovery. I proceed in the

Second Place, to shew whence this difference between good and bad Men, when they come to die, does proceed. And here I shall endeavour to shew, that this difference is founded in the true Nature and Reason of the Things themselves; in the Nature of Religion and Virtue, and of Impiety and Vice;
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in the different ways and courses of good and bad Men, which do naturally tend to these different Ends.

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And to make out this more clearly and distinctly, I shall endeavour to manifest these *two* things.

I. That a Religious and Virtuous Life, is a real ground of peace and serenity of Mind, of Comfort and Joy, under all the Evils and Calamities of Life, and especially at the hour of Death.

II. That Impiety and Wickedness is a real foundation of Guilt and Fear, of Horror and Despair in the day of Adversity and Affliction, and more especially in the approaches of Death.

I. That a Religious and Virtuous Life is a real ground of peace and serenity of Mind, of Comfort and Joy, under all the Evils and Calamities of Life, and especially at the hour of Death.

Under the Evils and Calamities of Life, Innocency is a great stay and support to our Minds under Sufferings, and will bear up our Spirits, when nothing else can, especially if a Man suffer for a good Conscience, *and for Righteousness sake*; because then, beside

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the comfort of innocency, we are entitled in a special manner to the favour of God, and the comforts and supports of his Holy Spirit, and the hopes of a glorious reward from that God, for whose sake and in whose cause we suffer. All trouble is tolerable to him who hath no burden of guilt upon his Mind, to him who is at peace with his own Conscience, and at peace with God, and is assured of his Favour and Friendship, of his Providence and Care, of his Approbation and Reward; this is a firm ground, not only of patience, but of joy to a good Man, in the saddest and most dismal condition he can fall into. *Unto the upright (saith the Psalmist) there ariseth light in darkness,* Psal. 112. 4. And no wonder, because he that fears God, and serves him faithfully, and suffers for him patiently, hath laid a sure foundation of comfort to himself, hath sown the Seeds of contentment and peace, of joy and gladness in his own Mind, which will spring up and flourish most, when we are in the most destitute and afflicted condition. *Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart,* says David, Psal. 97. 11. *The work of righteousness*

righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness, and assurance for ever, saith the Prophet *Esai.* 32.17.

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And more especially at the hour of death, then the comfort of a good Man overflows, and *he lifts up his head with joy, because his redemption draweth nigh* : then the reflection upon a well-spent and unspotted Life, fills his Soul with abundant consolation, with joy *unspeakable and full of glory* ; for God, and the things of another World, appear more real and substantial to him, as he draws near to them, and his Faith begins to be turned into sight and fruition ; he now stands upon the Confines of both Worlds, and discerns more clearly the vanity and emptiness of that which he is going from, and the substantial and durable Happiness of that which he is entering into. Here is the Trial of our Faith, and the Proof of Religion, by the real Fruits and Effects of it, in the Peace and Comfort which it gives to a good Man, when he is leaving this World ; so that *when he walks through the valley of death, he fears no ill*, and his hopes are then most lively and vigorous, when he is ready to give up the Ghost ; the voice
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of Nature, and of every Man's Reason and Conscience, as well as Scripture, *says to the righteous, It shall be well with him, for he shall eat the fruit of his doings; but wo unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given him.* Which brings me to the

II. Thing, namely, that Impiety and Wickedness is a real foundation of guilt and fear, of horror and despair, in the day of Adversity and Affliction, and especially in the approaches of Death.

And how can it be otherwise, when all inward support and comfort fail him, and all sorts of evil and calamity inward and outward assault him, and break in upon him at once? when the Principles of Infidelity fail him, and what he had made out so speciously to himself, vanisheth into nothing, *as a dream when one awakens, and as a vision in the night?* For when any great calamity befalls this Man, God, *who was not before in all his thoughts*, then begins to appear terrible to him, and he cannot banish the thoughts and fear of him out of his Mind. But how uncomfortable is this, to be convinc'd there is a God, when a Man hath most need

need of him, and can least hope for his favour or pity?

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But especially at the approach of death, what a sad preparation for that is an impious and wicked Life? How does his Conscience then fly in his face, and how bitter is the remembrance of those sins, which he committed with so much pleasure and greediness? What a terror is the Almighty to him, and the apprehension of that Vengeance that threatens him, and that eternal Misery which is ready to swallow him up? And in the midst of all this anguish and horror, which naturally spring from an Evil Conscience, and the guilt of a wicked Life, he is destitute of all comfort and hope; *he hath denied the God that is above,* and now he dares not look up to him: his whole Life hath been a continued Affront of the Divine Majesty, and an insolent defiance of his Justice; and what hopes can he now reasonably have of his Mercy? *Of the God that formed him, he hath been unmindful,* and hath used him with all the despite he could; and therefore he hath all the reason in the World to conclude, *that he that made him will not save*

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save him, and he that formed him will have no mercy on him. And this is the natural consequence of Impiety and Wickedness, it fills the Soul of a dying Sinner with trouble and anguish, with guilt and despair, when he is leaving the World, and puts him into the most dismal condition that can be imagin'd on this side Hell, and very like to it, without comfort, and without hope. I proceed to the

Third and last thing I proposed, viz. That if this be true, it is a demonstration on the side of Religion, and doth fully justifie and acquit the Wisdom of it, and that upon these *three accounts.*

I. Because the Principles of Religion, and the practice of them in a virtuous Life, when they come to the last and utmost Trial, do hold out, and are a firm and unshaken foundation of Peace and Comfort to us.

II. That they minister Comfort to us in the most needful and desirable time.

III. That when Men are commonly more serious and sober and impartial, and when their declarations and words are thought to be of greatest weight and credit, they give this Testimony to

to Religion and Virtue, and against
Impiety and Vice.

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I. That the Principles of Religion, and the Practice of them in a virtuous Life, when they come to the last and utmost Trial, do hold out, and are a firm and unshaken Foundation of Peace and Comfort to good men, at that time. The belief of a God, and of his Providence and Care of good men, and that *he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him*; the perswasion of our own immortality, and of the eternal recompence of another World; *that Jesus Christ came into the World to save sinners, and to purchase eternal Life and Happiness for those, who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality*: I say, the belief of these things, is commonly most strong and vigorous in the Minds of good Men, when they come to die; and they have then a more clear apprehension, and firm perswasion of the truth and reality of these Things, than ever they had in any time of their Lives, and find more Comfort from them, more Peace and Joy in the belief of them. And this is the great time of Trial, when Death presents

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presents it self to us, and the Terrors of it compass us about, whether upon occasion of Persecution or Sickness. These are *the Rains, and Storms, and Winds*, which will try upon what *Foundation* our Peace and Comfort is *built*; and nothing but the Principles of Religion, sincerely believed and practised, will make us firm and impregnable against these assaults. So our Saviour assures us, *Mat. 7. 24, 25. Who-soever heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them, that is, believes and practiseth my Doctrine, I will liken him to a wise man, which built his house upon a Rock, and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a Rock.*

And on the contrary, the Principles of Infidelity and Vice, are most apt to shrink and give back at such a time. Nay, for the most part they vanish and disappear, and upon the apprehension of death, a new light as it were springs up in their Minds, and things appear quite contrary to that Scheme which they had formed, and which they had taken so much pains to maintain and make probable

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to themselves; and that Hypothesis which they had been so long a building, appears now to have no foundation, and falls at once, and all their hopes together with it. And now the Infidel *believes and trembles*, is sensible of his wicked life, and of the vengeance that hangs over him, and was never in his life half so well satisfied of the Principles of Infidelity, as he is now convinc'd of the contrary, to his infinite trouble and confusion, that there is a God, and another life after this, and a terrible punishment to the workers of Iniquity.

And daily Experience confirms to us the Certainty and Truth of this matter, and that there is this difference for the most part very visible in the temper and carriage of good and bad men, when they come to die.

II. The Principles of Religion and Virtue do minister Comfort to us in the most needful and desirable times; and on the contrary, the Principles of Infidelity and Vice do not only fail us in this *day of distress*, but give great trouble to us at the most unseasonable time.

And this makes a mighty difference
between

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between the condition of these two sorts of Persons; for when would a Man desire to be at Peace and Quiet in his mind, but when his Body is restless and in pain? When would a Man wish for *strong consolation and hope*, that *anchor of the Soul sure and stedfast*, as the Apostle to the *Hebrews* calls it, but in that last and terrible conflict of Nature, with *the last of enemies*, which is *death*? And when would a Man dread trouble and anguish of Mind, but at such a time, when he is hardly able to sustain his bodily Pains and Infirmities? If it be true of every day of our lives, *sufficient for the day is the evil thereof*; much more of the day of death: It is enough surely to have that one enemy to encounter, at which Nature startles, and our best reason can hardly furnish us with force enough for the conflict, even when *the sting of death* is taken away, I mean the guilt of an evil Conscience: But when all evils assail a Man at once, pains without, and terrors within, a weak Body, and a *wounded Spirit*, an incurable disease, and intolerable despair, death ready to assault us, and Hell following it, How unreasonable is the Conjunction of

of so many and so great evils? Wise men are wont to provide with great care against such a time, that they may not be oppress'd with too many troubles at once; and therefore in the time of their health, they settle their worldly Concernments, and make their Wills, that when sickness or death comes, they may have no care upon them, nothing to do but to die. This is a time, when all the force of our Reason, and all the Comfort and Hope that Religion can give, will be little enough to give us a quiet and undisturbed passage out of this world into the other: and we shall be very miserable, if the terrors and stings of a guilty Conscience, and the pangs of death do seize upon us at once. And therefore a wise Man would make it the business of his whole life, to prevent this unhappy concurrence of evils, so unsupportable to human Nature; and to render Death, which is grievous and terrible enough of it self, as comfortable and easie as 'tis possible. For if there were nothing beyond this life, yet it were worth the while to provide for a quiet death; and if men were sure to be possess'd of these Passions of Hope and Fear, of

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Comfort and Despair, which usually attend good and bad men when they come to die, there is no Man that calculates things wisely would for all the pleasures of sin, forfeit the Peace and Comfort of a righteous Soul, going out of the World full of the hopes of a blessed Immortality; and endure the anguish and torment of a guilty Conscience, and the amazing terrors of a despairing and dying Sinner. This is a condition so sad and fearful, that a wise Man would avoid it upon any terms.

III. When men are commonly more serious and sober and impartial, and their declarations and words are thought to be of greatest weight and credit, they give this testimony to Religion and Virtue, and against Impiety and Vice.

It is generally seen, when men come to die, that the manner of their death is answerable to the course of their life; that the reflection upon an holy and virtuous life, is a great ease and comfort to Mens Minds: And on the contrary, the guilt of a wicked life, is apt to flie in their Faces, and to disturb their Minds, and fill them with horror. And this is a critical time, when

when the Consciences of men are usually awake, and apt to pass an impartial judgment and censure upon themselves. And for this, the Infidel may believe one of his own great Authors, I mean *Lucretius*, who observes, that when men are in distress, and the apprehensions of Death are upon them, Religion doth then shew its force.

Acrius advertunt animos ad Religionem,

The thoughts of it are then more pungent and powerful upon their minds.

*Nam veræ voces tum demùm pectore ab imo
Eliciuntur, & eripitur persona, manet res.*

Mens words then come from the bottom of their hearts, the Mask is taken off, and things then appear to them as indeed they are.

Now, that when men are so impartial and in good earnest, when they stand upon the Confines of both Worlds, and can view them at once, when they are leaving this World, and are now no longer in danger of being blinded or flattered or tempted by it, and are just ready to pass into the other World, and so much the more likely

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to discern the reality of it, as they approach nearer to it; I say, that in these Circumstances, men generally declare on the side of Piety and Virtue, and declaim most vehemently against their Sins and Vices; that generally speaking, and according to what is commonly seen in Experience, the Man who hath led a Religious and Virtuous Life, is, when he comes to die, quiet and easie to himself, hath no regret at what he hath done, no severe and angry reflections upon the strict course of a Virtuous Life, his Conscience doth not accuse or upbraid or terrifie him, for having lived *soberly and righteously and godly in this world*; nay, so far from this, that if he have any trouble, it is not because he hath lived piously and virtuously, but because he hath not lived more so, because he hath come short of his duty, and hath been so imperfectly and inconstantly good: That generally dying men repent of their evil actions, and are troubled for them, but no Man ever repented himself of serving God, and doing good. This surely is a great Testimony on the side of Religion and Virtue, because it is the Testimony not only of

the Friends to Religion, but of those who have been the greatest enemies to it, and at a time when they are most likely to declare the inward sense of their Minds, and to speak most impartially without design or disguise. When the ungodly Man and the Sinner comes to lie upon a death bed, he hath then other apprehensions of things than he had, or would own to have in the days of his Health and Prosperity, and his Soul is full of sadness and trouble, of perplexity and anguish, of fear and despair, because of the wicked and lewd life which he hath led. But why art thou so dismayed, Man? Why so troubled and cast down? So restless and unquiet, so wretched and miserable in thine own thoughts?

If thou hast done well in renouncing the Principles of Religion, and breaking loose from all Obligations of Duty and Conscience, in gratifying thine inclinations and lusts, why art thou now troubled at it? If thou wert in the right all the while, why dost thou not now stand to it, and justify thy actings, and bear up like a Man? If the Principles thou wentest upon were sound and firm, why dost thou not

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still take comfort and support from them? Why does thy Heart faint, and thy Spirit sink within thee? How comes thy imagination to be so disturbed with such frightful appearances, and to haunt thee continually with such vain and groundless terrors? Whence is it that those who have taken a contrary course, and lived a quite different life, have so much the advantage of thee, in the Comfort and Peace and Tranquillity of their Minds when they come to die?

But if thou hast been in the wrong, and dost now discern real cause for so much trouble and fear, why didst thou not consider in time? why wast thou not troubled sooner, when trouble would have done thee good, and a great part of the anguish which thou now feelest, and all the misery thou art so afraid of, might effectually have been prevented?

I think it is said by those who are concerned, to take off the force of this terrible objection against infidelity and a wicked life; That when men are in a dying condition, their Spirits are low, and their understandings weak and disturbed, and their Minds thrown off

off the hinges; and therefore it is no wonder if they want that firmness and resolution of Spirit, that consideration and courage which they had in the time of their health.

This is speciously said, and with some shew and appearance of Reason: but it does by no means answer, and take off the Objection. For if this were a true Reason at the bottom, why is it not true on both sides? Why are not both sorts of Men, when they are sick and near to die, those who have lived piously and virtuously, as well as the loose and wicked livers, equally troubled? why are they not disturbed and afraid alike? Hath not Sickness the same natural effect upon them, and does it not equally weaken and disorder their Minds? But we see generally in experience a plain and remarkable difference between these two sorts of men, when they come to die; so plain that it is not to be denied; and so remarkable, that there must be some considerable cause of it; and so general and constant, that it cannot without great folly and perverseness be imputed to chance. Now what can we imagine should be the reason of this palpable

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pable difference between good and bad Men, when they are under the apprehensions of Death, but this, That a pious and virtuous Life is a real ground of Peace and Joy, of Comfort and Confidence at that time; and that impiety and wickedness are a real Foundation of guilt and fear, of horror and despair in a dying hour; in a word, That the different ways and courses of good and bad Men, do naturally lead to these different Ends, and produce these different Effects?

Either this must be granted, and then the whole Cause of Infidelity and Vice is yielded and given up at once; or else men must fly to that which seems the most unreasonable and extravagant Paradox in the World, and does effectually give up the Cause another way, *viz.* That a false opinion of things and a mere delusion, is more apt to support the fainting Spirits of a dying Man, and to give him more Comfort and Hope in the day of distress, than a right and well-grounded persuasion.

But this (as I said before) does effectually give up the Cause another way. For if this be true, then certainly they are

are rightest that are in the wrong, and Religion, tho it were a mistake, ought to be embraced and entertained by a wise Man, because of this great Benefit and Comfort of it. If this be truly the case, then every wise Man must say, Let me be so deceived, Let it be my lot and portion, to live and die in so pleasant and comfortable and happy an error, as that of Religion is.

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So that whether Religion be true or false, it must, according to this reasoning, be necessarily granted to be the only wise Principle, and safe Hypothesis for a Man to live and die by. And this very thing that it is so, is a strong evidence of the truth of Religion, and even a demonstration of the real Excellency of Virtue; because no other supposition but that of Religion, does so clearly solve all appearances, and so fully and exactly answer the natural desires and hopes and fears of Mankind. If the Being of God, and the obligations of Religion and Virtue be admitted, this gives an easie account of the whole matter, and shews us, that sin and vice is the foundation of guilt and trouble; and that Religion and Virtue do naturally produce Peace and

Vol. 9. and Comfort: for that is to be esteem-
ed and reckoned the natural effect of
any thing, which doth generally be-
long to the whole kind. If those who
live Religiously and Virtuously, have
generally Peace and Comfort when
they come to die, and those who live
wickedly are commonly full of guilt
and remorse, of fear and perplexity at
that time; this is reason enough to be-
lieve that these are the natural effects of
those Causes: and that men when they
come to die are, according as they have
lived, afraid of the Divine Justice, and
of the Vengeance of another World,
or confident of God's goodness, and
the Rewards of another life, is a strong
Argument of a superiour Being that
governs the World, and will reward
men according to their Works; be-
cause no supposition but this doth an-
swer the natural Hopes and Fears of
men. And this likewise is an Argu-
ment of the Immortality of our Souls,
and of the Rewards and Punishments
of another life; and as good a Demon-
stration of the Reality and Excellency
of Religion and Virtue, from these
happy effects of it, as the nature of the
thing is capable of.

And now to make some Reflections upon what has been said upon this Argument.

First, The Consideration of the different Ends of good and bad Men, is a mighty Encouragement to Piety, and a good Life. Nothing in this World shews us so remarkable a difference between the Righteous and the Wicked, as a Death-bed. Then a good Man most sensibly enjoys the comfort of a good life, and *the peaceable fruits of righteousness*; and the sinner then begins to reap the bitter fruits of sin. What a difference is there then, between the comfort and trouble, the composure and disturbance, the hopes and fears of these two Persons? And next to the actual possession of blessedness, the comfortable hopes and expectation of it are the greatest Happiness; and next to being plung'd into it, the fearful apprehensions of eternal misery are the greatest torment. *The wicked is driven away in his wickedness*, is violently hurried out of the World full of guilt and trouble. What storms and tempests are then raised in his mind, from the fear of God's Justice,
and

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and the despair of his Mercy? But *the righteous hath hope in his death.* The reflection upon a Holy and Virtuous Life, and the Conscience of a Man's uprightness and sincerity, are a spring of Joy and Peace to him, which refresheth his Mind with unspeakable Comfort and Pleasure, under the very pangs of Death. With what Triumph and Exultation of Spirit doth the Blessed Apostle St. Paul, upon the review of his labours and sufferings for God and his Truth, speak of his dissolution? 2 Tim. 4. 6, 7, 8. *For I am now ready to be offered up, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day.* He speaks with such a lively sense of it, as if he had his Crown in his view, and were just ready to take hold of it. And what would not a Man give, what would he not be contented to do and suffer, to be thus affected, when he comes to leave the World, and to be able to bear the thoughts of his Death and Dissolution with so composed and chearful a Mind? And yet this

this is the natural, and genuine effect of a Holy and Useful Life. And that which the same Apostle tells us, was the ground of his rejoicing under sufferings, is likewise the comfort and support of good Men at the time of their Death, 2 Cor. 1. 12. *Our rejoicing, saith he, is this, the testimony of our conscience; that in simplicity and godly sincerity, we have had our conversation in the world.* All the Holy and Virtuous Actions of our lives, are so many seeds of Peace and Comfort to us at the hour of our Death, which we shall more sensibly enjoy, when we come to depart this life. For then the Consciences of men are apt to deal most freely and impartially with them; and *if our hearts do not then condemn us, we may have comfort and confidence towards God.*

I believe there are some very pious and good Souls, who have lived very disconsolate and full of doubtings, and been under a cloud the greatest part of their lives, who yet upon the approach of Death, and just as they were leaving the World, have broken forth, as the Sun sometimes doth just before his Setting. I know it is not always thus; there are, I doubt not, some good men who

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Vol. 9. who go out of this World with little or no Comfort; and yet so soon as they step into another World, are encompass'd with *joy unspeakable and full of glory*: And tho' the Comfort of such Persons be not so early and forward, yet it cannot chuse but be extreamly welcome; and it must needs put a doubting and trembling Soul into a strange kind of extasie and ravishment, to be thus unexpectedly surprized with Happiness.

Secondly, Since this is so great and evident a testimony of the Truth and Goodness of Religion, is it not a strange thing, and to be wonder'd at, that true Religion and Virtue should be so little practis'd, and Impiety and Vice should so generally prevail in the World, against so many Bars and Obstacles, and against such invincible Objections to the contrary? Not only against our inward Judgment and Conscience, but against the general Sense and Experience of men in all Ages, the constant declarations and testimonies of dying men, both good and bad, when they are most serious, and their words are thought to be of greatest credit and weight; against the best
and

and soberest reason of Mankind, and their true Interest and Happiness; against the Health of mens Bodies, and, which is the most dear and valuable thing in the World, the peace and quiet of their Minds; and that not only in the time of Life and Health, but in the hour of Death, when men stand most in need of Comfort and Support; in a word, against the grain of human Nature, and in despite of mens natural fears of Divine Vengeance, and to the defeating of all our hopes of a blessed Immortality in another World, and against the inflexible Nature and Reason of things, by no art or endeavour of Man, by no colours of wit, or subtilty of discourse, by no practice or custom to the contrary, by no conspiracy and combination of men, ever to be changed or altered? So that we may say with *David*, *Have all the workers of wickedness no knowledge*, no consideration of themselves? no tenderness and regard to their present and future Interest? Nay, if there were no life after this, setting aside the case of extrem Suffering and Persecution, Religion and Virtue are certainly to be chosen, not only for our Contentment in life,

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life, but for our Comfort in Death : and if there be a state of Happiness or Misery remaining for men after Death, as most assuredly there is, much more in order to the attaining of that endless Happiness, and the avoiding of that eternal, and intolerable misery. *O that men were wise, that they understood this, and would consider their latter End !*

SER.

SERMON XV.

The Usefulness of considering
our latter End.

PSAL. XC. 12.

*So teach us to number our days, that we may
apply our hearts unto wisdom.*

THE Title of this Psalm tells us who was the Author of it. It is call'd a *Prayer of Moses, the Man of God*; or as the *Chaldee Paraphrase* more expressly, *The Prayer which Moses the Prophet of the Lord prayed, when the People of the House of Israel sinned in the Wilderiness*. Upon which provocation of theirs, God in great displeasure threatned, and was immutably resolved that they should all perish in the Wilderiness, and that none of the men that came out of *Egypte*, *Caleb* and *Joshua* only excepted, should enter into the promised Land, but should all die in the space of forty years.

Upon this occasion *Moses* made this *Psalm* or *Prayer* to God, being a devout Meditation upon the shortness and frailty of Human Life,

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which was now brought into a much narrower compass, than in former Ages. But the case of that People was different from that of the rest of Mankind, being limited and confined to *forty years*. They might die sooner than that time; but that was the utmost bound of their lives, which none were to exceed, which seems to be the Ground and Reason of the Petition, which *Moses* puts up to God in the Text, *So teach us, &c.*

For I do not think that *Moses* does here beg of God, to reveal to every one of them the precise End and Term of his life; *that* might seem to savour of too much presumption or curiosity: but since they knew that according to the ordinary course of Nature, the life of Man was then reduced to *threescore and ten*, or *fourscore years*; and since God by a peremptory Sentence had pronounced, that two Persons only excepted, all that vast number which came out of *Egypt*, and even *Moses* himself, should die within the compass of *forty years*; it was a very pious and proper request, which *Moses* here puts up for himself and the rest of that People, that God would give them Wisdom to make a right use of the notice which they had of their End, since it might happen at any time, but could not reach beyond *forty years*, reckoning from the time of their coming out of *Egypt*.

To know the determinate time of our life, or to know certainly that our life shall not exceed such a term (which was the case of the *Israelites* in the Wilderness) is a very awakening thing, and does commonly rouse men more than

than the general consideration of our own frailty and mortality. And yet to a wise and considerate Man, it ought in reason to be the same. For that which will certainly be, ought to be reckoned upon and provided for; and if it be uncertain when it will be, whether at some distance, or the next moment, we ought presently to take care about it, and to be always in a readiness for it, lest we should be surprized and overtaken.

And then this Prayer is as proper for us, as it was for *Moses* and the *Israelites*, tho we are not just under the same Circumstances that they were. They were under a peremptory Sentence of death within *forty years*, and none of them knew how much sooner they might be taken away: and this is not much different from our case; for we are liable to death at any time, every day, every moment; and how few of us in this Congregation can reasonably either hope, or expect to have our lives prolonged beyond the term of *40 years*? Nay, it is very probable, that not one of us in an hundred will hold out so long. And then this Prayer may be as fit for us, as it was for *Moses* and the *Israelites*, that God would *teach us so to number our days*; that is, to make such an account of the shortness and uncertainty of our lives, and so to consider and lay to heart our latter End, *that we may apply our Hearts unto Wisdom*; that is, that we may manage and conduct this frail and short and uncertain life, in the best manner and to the wisest purposes.

And this Consideration of our latter End was always esteemed by the wisest men, a principal

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pal part and main point of Wisdom. *Socrates*, who was by the general consent of wise men (a more infallible Oracle, than that of *Apollo*) esteem'd the wisest of all the Philosophers, gives us this definition of *Philosophy*, that *it is the meditation or study of death*; to intimate to us, that this is true Wisdom, to be much in the thoughts of our latter End, and in a constant readiness and preparation for it. And this a greater than *Socrates* had long before him observed to be a chief point of Wisdom, I mean *Moses the Man of God*, that divine Person and Prince of the antient Prophets, not only in this Psalm, but also in his last divine Song, a little before his Death, in which he makes this the sum of all his wishes for the People of *Israel*, that God would endow them with this high point of Wisdom, *Deut. 32. 29. O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter End!* This is true *Wisdom* and *Philosophy* to consider our latter End.

And this by God's assistance shall be the Argument which I intend to handle from these Words; namely, to shew what Influence and Effect the serious Consideration of our latter End, and of the shortness and uncertainty of this present life, ought in reason to have upon us. And of this I shall give you an account in these following particulars.

I. The meditation of our latter End should make us to take into consideration our whole lives and our whole duration, that we may resolve and act accordingly. And this is a main point of Wisdom, to understand our selves and the nature of our Beings, of what we consist, and for what duration we are design'd; whether

ther we consist only of Matter a little better fashioned and moulded, and made up into a more curious and complicated Engine, consisting of many secret and hidden springs and wheels, and fitted for greater variety of motions, and for more fine and subtile Operations, than the Bodies of those other Creatures which we esteem below us : or whether we be endowed with a spiritual Principle, wholly distinct from Matter, and capable not only of Sense, but of acts of Reason, and of the Impressions of Religion, from the apprehension of a Deity and a superior Being that is of it self, and made us and all other things. In a word, whether we shall *die like beasts* ; or whether there be *an immortal spirit within us*, which hath no dependence upon Matter and the bodily and visible part of our selves, but is *a much better and more enduring substance*, which hath no principle of corruption in it self, but shall survive these perishing bodies, and when they are moulder'd into dust, shall subsist in a happy or miserable condition, according as we have behaved our selves in this World.

For these are two very different Hypotheses and Schemes of Things, and ought to affect us very differently, and to inspire us with different resolutions, and to put us upon a quite contrary method and conduct of our lives.

For on the one hand, if we be well assur'd, that we shall be utterly extinguished by Death, *like the beasts that perish*, then we have nothing to take care of but our bodies, because we are nothing else ; then we need not to extend our thoughts, our hopes or fears, beyond this World, and this present life ; because we have nothing to

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do, but to please our selves with present Enjoyments, and to live so with other men, as may make most for our temporal quiet and satisfaction and security.

But then we are to consider very well, whether these things be certainly so, and whether we may rely upon it, and whether it will bear all that weight which we lay upon it; whether these Principles will not fail us, when we come most to stand in need of the comfort and support of them, and when death is in view and making up towards us, quite vanish and disappear: because it is of infinite consequence to us, to be well assur'd of this, since our happiness or misery to all Eternity depends upon it. And therefore nothing less than a demonstration of the impossibility of the thing, of our having immortal Spirits that shall survive our Bodies, and subsist apart from them, and be extreamly miserable or happy in another World; I say, nothing but a demonstration of the impossibility of this, ought to be satisfaction to us in a case of so great danger, and upon which so much does depend.

For if there be a possibility on the other side of our having immortal Souls, which shall live for ever in another World, nothing can acquit us from the greatest imprudence, if we should neglect to take care of that better and more lasting part of our selves, and to provide for that duration which shall never have an End.

And therefore if the supposition of the Soul's Immortality be infinitely more probable, as
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better agreeing with all the notions which men have of God and his Providence, and with the natural desires and hopes and fears of Mankind, and as most suitable to all our capacities and expectations, and to the general opinion and consent of wise men in all Ages ; then is it infinitely more safe, and consequently more wise, to proceed upon this supposition, and to provide and act accordingly.

Thus *to number our days*, that is, to make such an account of the shortness and uncertainty of this life, as to employ it mainly in the care and preparation for a better life, will engage us effectually in the business of Religion. And this perhaps is the meaning of this phrase in the Text, of *applying our hearts to wisdom*, according to that of *Job*, *Job* 28. 28. *But unto man he said, Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom* ; as if he had said, this is the true Wisdom, the great Excellency and Perfection of human Nature is Religion, the lively sense and firm belief of a Deity, and a carriage and demeanour suitable to that belief ; and that man is well taught, and rightly instructed in the great business and concernment of this life, and makes a wise reckoning and account of the shortness and uncertainty of it, who applies himself to the business of Religion : for this is the fundamental Principle of Wisdom, by which our whole life, and all the actions of it, ought to be governed and conducted.

So that if we have Immortal spirits, which shall live and continue for ever ; we cannot in reason but take our whole life and our whole

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duration into consideration. And if we do so, we can never justify it to our selves, to employ all our care and time about the worst and more ignoble part of our selves, and to make Provision only for the few days of our Pilgrimage here in this World, without any regard to that eternal duration, which we shall have in another World.

The serious Consideration of this cannot fail to make us careful of our Souls, and concern'd for eternity; and in order to the securing the happiness of that state, to mind us to *work out our Salvation* with great care and diligence; that if it be possible, we may avoid the misery, and obtain the happiness of another World; because there is no comparison between the Goods and Evils of this life, and those of the other, neither in respect of the degree, nor of the duration of them. And therefore it must needs be great Wisdom, to forego the good things of this life, to obtain those of the other; and to bear the Evils and Afflictions of this life, to escape those of the other. For what Man in his wits, for a temporal convenience and satisfaction, would forfeit an eternal Benefit and Advantage; and to escape a present evil, which cannot last long, would run himself upon one infinitely greater, and which will last for ever?

Consider then, and shew your selves men. Can there be a greater oversight and miscarriage in the Conduct of our Affairs, than to mind that least which concerns us most? Is it possible for men to run into a greater mistake, than to think that their great business in this World, is

is to mind the things of this World? And yet the greatest part of Mankind not only run into this mistake at their first setting out, but persist in it all their days; as if their great and indeed only concernment were to please themselves for the present, and to provide for this World, as if they were to live always in it; forgetting all this while, that they have Immortal Souls, which shall survive their Bodies, and after a time be reunited to them, to live for ever, deprived of that happiness which they would take no care to secure, and undergoing that misery and punishment, which they would be at no pains to prevent whilst they were in this world, and the opportunity of securing the one, and avoiding the other, was in their hands.

II. The thoughts of our latter End should make us very serious and composed in our Spirits. For if we have Immortal Souls, as well as dying Bodies; if we shall live for ever, and if the happiness of all Eternity depends upon the improvement of this short time of our lives, and our carriage and demeanour while we are here in this World; then it is no trifling business, it is not a matter of small concernment to us how we live here, and manage our selves during our abode in this World.

Whom do not the lively thoughts of death, and the near approach of it make grave and serious? and many men much wiser and more considerate than ever they were in any other time of their lives, and much truer Judges of things. They can then tell how they ought to have liv'd,
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what Use they should have made of their time, and what Use they would make of it, if God would be pleased to prolong it to them.

The near view of another World is an amazing thing, and apt to inspire men with better thoughts and resolutions than ever they had before. And why should not the clear prospect of it at a distance, and the assur'd belief of it, have the same effect upon us, to make us serious, and to mind in good earnest, *in this our day, the things which belong to our peace, and to wait all the days of our appointed time, till our change shall come?*

And therefore to engage us to a continual seriousness and watchfulness, the great Judge of the World hath hid from us both the time of the general Judgment, and of our particular Summons out of this World, that we might never be unprovided for the main chance, for that which may happen at any time, and which will concern us for ever.

III. The meditation of our latter End should put us upon minding the great business of our lives with all our might, and make us very vigorous and industrious in it, I mean the business of Religion and the Salvation of our Souls. And if we set up this, as in reason we ought, for the great End and Design of our lives, and the main scope of all our actions, it will make our lives of a piece, and every part thereof agreeable to it self; because our Mind will stand continually bent one way, and all our thoughts and cares and endeavours will be united in one great End and Design.

And

And it will oblige us to great diligence and industry, and make us work hard, to think how great a work we have to do, and how little time to do it in, perhaps much less than most of us do imagine. It is not an easy work for a Man to become good, and fit for Heaven; it requires time and care, and great watchfulness over our selves, great strugglings, and many a conflict with the evil inclinations of our minds, which after we have conquered 'em will often rally and make head again; a stout resistance of temptations, a stiff and obstinate resolution not to yield to them, and a *patient continuance in well-doing*. The Consideration whereof should make us very careful and diligent to get *oil into our Lamps*; that is, all those Graces and Virtues, all those good dispositions which may fit us for another World, and prepare us for Eternity; it should make us very vigorous and industrious to do all the good we can, while the opportunity of doing it is in our hands, and to make our selves as good as we can, because this is the time and season of laying the Foundation of our future happiness, and increasing the degrees of it; for *as we sow, so shall we reap: he that sows sparingly, shall reap sparingly; and he that sows plentifully, shall reap plentifully*. Every degree of Virtue and Goodness that we attain to in this World, will meet with a suitable reward, and a more resplendent degree of Glory and Happiness in the next Life.

And we shall have this advantage by a great industry and diligence in *working out our own salvation*, that if we have made Religion the great
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care and business of our lives, we shall have nothing to do when we come to die, but to renew our Repentance for the errors and miscarriages of our lives, and to beg God's Pardon and Forgiveness of them, for the sake of the meritorious Obedience and Suffering of our Blessed Saviour; to comfort our selves in the goodness and promises of God, and in the glorious hopes of the Happiness which we are ready to enter upon; and in the mean time to exercise Faith and Patience for a very little while, till death put an end to the sorrows and miseries of life.

IV. The Meditation of our latter End should make us much in the exercise of Repentance, and to renew it frequently; because we continually offend God and provoke him every day, if not by sins of commission, yet of omission and neglect in one kind or other, and by the imperfection of our best actions and services; if not by presumptuous sins and against knowledg, yet by manifold sins of ignorance and infirmity; so that the best of us may say with *David* every day, *Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret sins. If thou shouldst be extream to mark what is done amiss, O Lord who can stand?*

Thus by exercising a daily, or at least a very frequent Repentance, we may keep our accounts in good measure even, and not be in a hurry and confusion when we come to die, neither knowing where to begin our Repentance, nor how to go through with so great a work in so short a time, and in Circumstances of so much weakness and distraction.

traction. There are hardly any of us, especially of us who are Ministers, and have frequent occasion to attend upon sick beds, but have seen several in these wretched Circumstances, not knowing what to do, desirous to repent, but what through weakness of Body, and horror and confusion of mind, not knowing how to go about it, lamenting their neglect of it in the time of their health, and despairing of doing it now with any success and acceptance. These are sad spectacles indeed, and ought to be loud warnings to us who are in health, and have the opportunity of Repentance before us, to make use of it, and to set about this necessary work out of hand, *to day whilst it is call'd to day, lest any of us be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin,* and be at last brought into those miserable straits which I have been describing, and which no Man that understands himself would be in for all the World.

V. The Meditation of the shortness and uncertainty of life should make us great Husbands of our time, as that which next to our Immortal Souls, and for the sake of them, is the most precious and valuable thing in the World. For as on the one hand, nothing will comfort us more when we come to die and leave this World, than the remembrance of a well-spent life, carefully employed in the service of God, and for the Benefit and Advantage of men; so on the other hand, there is nothing for which our Consciences will more bitterly reproach us at that time, and fly in our Faces with greater fury

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fury and rage, than for an useless and unprofitable, especially if it have been likewise (as is too commonly seen) a wicked and vicious life.

Our life is uncertain, and therefore we should seize the present time, and improve it to the best advantage, tho it be but short in itself, and very short in respect of the great and long work which we have to do in it. To prevent or cure the manifold distempers of our Minds, and to preserve our Souls in a good state of health, and to keep them free from the disorders of our Appetites and Passions, requires a wise conduct, and a very careful management of our selves. Evil and inveterate habits are not master'd and mortified in an instant; nor the contrary Virtues attain'd in any measure of Perfection, but by long practice and slow degrees. There must be time and patience and perseverance for the doing of these things, and we must *give all diligence to add to our faith knowledg, and to our knowledg virtue*, and one Virtue to another, and one degree of Virtue to another; and nothing without this can minister true comfort to us in the hour of death, and make us *to lift up our heads with joy in the day of Judgment*.

The Consideration of this should make us careful, not to neglect any occasion of doing good, or of making our selves better; and restrain us from allowing too much of our time to those great wasters and devourers of it, Diversions and Visits; because they do not only hinder us from better work and employment, but are apt insensibly to work us off from that serious temper of Mind, which becomes

comes those who do in good earnest design for another World.

VI. The Meditation of our latter End should make us always to prefer the doing of our Duty, and the keeping of a good Conscience, to all temporal considerations whatsoever, whether of Fame and the good Opinion of men, or of Wealth and Riches, of Honour and Dignity, of Authority and Power, *choosing rather with Moses to suffer afflictions with the People of God, than to have the temporary enjoyments of sin.*

And as for Pleasure, there is little in this World that is true and sincere, besides the Pleasure of doing our duty, and of doing good ; I am sure none that is comparable to it. A good Conscience is *a continual Feast*, and he certainly pleaseth himself best, and is most easy in his own Mind, who is conscious to himself, that he endeavours as well as he can to do what he ought.

VII. The Meditation of our mortality should teach us the true price and value of all temporal Enjoyments, and make us duly affected towards them, and to sit as loose to them in our affections as we can ; for nothing surely can be more apt to beget in us a coldness and indifferency towards the Enjoyments of this World, than the Consideration of the uncertainty of all these things, and of the shortness and uncertainty of our own lives.

Or if we suppose that they and we both should continue for some number of years, yet there will be an end of them or us ; and nothing is to be reckon'd a lasting Happiness, that will have an end, tho it should be long first ; for
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for where there can be either sorrow or an end of our joy, there can be no true felicity.

Besides that the nature of the things of this World is such, that they afford but little Happiness to us whilst we have them; we cannot do well without them, and yet we can hardly do well with them. Most of the Enjoyments of this World, as desirable as they are to us, they are very dangerous, and are always attended with some inconvenience or other; and even when we have all that we can wish for in this World, we are apt to be still uneasy, either something troubles us, or nothing pleaseth us; we are pained with fullness, and cloyed with the long Enjoyment of the best things this World can give us. Why then should we set such an high and unreasonable value upon these temporary Enjoyments, and be so much concerned for those things, of which we have so slippery a hold and so slender an assurance, and which afford us so very little contentment and satisfaction when we have them, and yet give us so much grief and trouble when we lose them? Considering how soon we *must*, and how suddenly we *may* leave this World, and all the Enjoyments of it, we ought in reason to set no great price upon them.

VIII. The Consideration of the shortness and uncertainty of our lives, should make us contented with our present condition, and patient under all the Evils and Afflictions which may befall us in this World. A little may content us for a little while, for the short time of our abode here; and since we do not expect our rest
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and happiness in this World, we cannot think our selves disappointed, if we do not meet with it: If our condition be tolerable, it is well, and we have reason to be contented with it; since it is as much as this World usually affords. If it be very mean and strait, it cannot last long; and even that consideration should silence our murmurings, and should restrain and check our discontent.

And it should make us patient likewise under the greatest Evils and Afflictions of this present life, to consider that they will shortly have an end; either they will give off of themselves, or they will carry us off and make an end of us, and all the patience we have exercised will be rewarded far beyond the proportion of our Sufferings.

At the worst, the Afflictions and Sufferings of this present time are not like the troubles and miseries of the other World, they will not last always. The most grievous things that can befall us here are not like the torments of Hell, neither for the degree, nor the duration of them, without intermission and without end.

IX. The Meditation of Death, and of the Consequences of it, should make us upright and sincere in all our Words and Actions. Hypocrisy and Dissimulation, as much as they are practised, are no part of true Wisdom, no not as to this World; they recoil terribly upon men, and turn to their reproach and disadvantage so soon as they

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are discerned, and they cannot be long practised without being discover'd. But if we regard the other World, all disguises and arts of deceit are perfect folly; because then *God will bring every work into judgment, and every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil, as Solomon assures us, Eccles. 12. 14.* And our Blessed Saviour cautions us against Hypocrisie, upon this Consideration, That there is a day a coming, when all the false pretences of men shall be exposed and laid open, and all those Masks and Vizors which men wear in this World will fall off, and the actions of men shall appear in their true colours, *Luke 12. 1, 2.* *Beware,* says our Saviour there, *first of all of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisie: for there is nothing cover'd, that shall not be revealed; nor hid, that shall not be known.*

Lastly, The Meditation of our latter End should put us upon a careful and continual and particular preparation for the time of our Death and Dissolution. And this is very well worth our while; and the sooner we set about it, the better: because, when this work is in any good measure done, we have rescued our selves from that *Bondage*, to which most men are all their life long *subject*, because of the continual *fear of death*. Nothing abates the terror of death, like a due preparation for it. When this is once made, we cannot be much concerned when it comes; for to a well prepared mind, sooner or later makes no great difference: but

but if we have delayed this necessary work, the longer we have delayed it, the more unfit we shall be for it, and the more unwilling to set about it; and if necessity drives us to it at last, we shall find that old Age and Sickness are but bad times to make preparation for Death in, to begin our Repentance and the change of a bad life. He that prepares not for Death, before he draws near to it, and comes to lie upon a sick-bed, is like him that begins to study the Art of Navigation, when he hath present Occasion and Use for the Skill which he hath not yet learned, when his Vessel is driven among Rocks, and is every moment in danger of being dash'd in pieces.

Let this then be establish'd for a firm Principle and Rule, That the best and surest Preparation for a happy and comfortable Death, is a holy and good Life. For nothing will disarm Death of its Terrors, like the Conscience of our own Innocency, and of a sincere desire and endeavour to please God in the general course and tenour of our lives, and of a sincere Repentance for all the errors and miscarriages of our lives. And tho our life be short and uncertain, yet it is a great deal that we may do by way of preparation for another World, if we begin and set out betimes, and be good Husbands of the present Opportunities. It is a great way that we may go in a short time, if we be always moving and pressing forwards.

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But the mischief is, many men pass fifty or sixty Years in the World, and when they are just going out of it, they bethink themselves and step back as it were, to do something which they had all this while forgot, viz. the main business for which they came into the World, to repent of their sins and reform their lives, and make their peace with God, and in time to prepare for Eternity. This, which is forgotten and deferred to the last, ought to have been first thought of, and to have been made the great business of their whole lives.

But I proceed to give some more particular directions concerning our preparation for Death; namely,

1. By frequent meditation of it, which will render it more familiar to us, and help us to tame this Monster, and to take off the dread of it; and therefore we should accustom our selves to the thoughts of it, that we may in some measure be reconciled to it.

2. We should endeavour to mitigate the evil and terror of Death, by thinking of something worse, I mean the Evils and Miseries of life. For when we once come to look upon Death as a Remedy of all the Evils of life, we shall then begin to be reconciled to it, and if we be wise, shall be glad to be out of the noise and danger and suffering of so many Evils as we are continually liable to in this World; and shall thank God heartily for dismissing us, and giving us leave to die, and by death to put
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an end to this miserable life, and to begin a better and happier life, which shall never have an end.

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And we should likewise meditate much on the Glory and Happiness of another World. For if we be once possessed with a firm belief and persuasion of it, we shall think the time long that we are detained from it, and wish for that which we so much feared, I mean Death, that it may bring us to the enjoyment of that which we have much more Reason to desire.

And indeed considering (as I said before) the many Evils and Miseries which we are liable to and always in danger of, while we are in this World, we have cause to thank God that we were born to die, and that we are not condemned to live for ever in this World. So that whenever God shall think fit to release us, we ought to esteem it a favour: but if he will have us to stay a little longer, we must with patience wait for another opportunity of making our escape out of an evil and troublesome World. But methinks we should not much desire to ride it out in the Storm any longer, when the Port is open and we may safely enter in. And then,

3. By way of farther preparation for Death, we should endeavour to maintain always a lively sense of it in our Minds, that we may be, to all good Effects and Purposes, as much under the power of it as if it were just approaching, as if the Physician  
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or the Judg had past the Sentence of death upon us. We should always reckon upon that which may happen the next moment ; and if we do so, we can never be extreamly surpris'd ; but *whenever our Lord comes, shall be found watching.* And,

*Lastly,* We should make it our constant Prayer to God, that he would fit us for our dissolution, and stand by us and comfort us in that needful time, without whose gracious support and assistance, both Physicians, and even the Ministers of God themselves are but *miserable comforters.* It should be our daily Petition to God, that he would enable us to perform this last act of our life with decency and constancy of Mind, that neither our disease nor our weakness may break the firmness of our Spirits, or leave us to be amazed with fear, or betrayed with peevishness, so as to render us uneasy to our selves, or to make our Friends willing to be rid of us.

But more especially, when God thinks fit, either by the nature or present danger of our distemper, to give us a nearer summons and clearer warning of our Mortality, we should take the opportunity to impress upon our Minds a deep and more lively sense of another World, that we may quicken our pace, and *work the work of him that sent us into the world, while it is day ; because the night is coming when no man can work.*

Nature I know is fond of life, and apt to be still longing after a longer continu-  
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ance here, and to find many delays and excuses to tarry yet a while longer in this World : and yet a very long life, with the usual burdens and infirmities of it, is seldom in reason desirable ; for it is but the same thing over again, or worse ; so many more Days and Nights, Summers and Winters, a repetition of the same Pleasures, but still with less pleasure and relish ; a return of the same or greater pains and troubles, but still with less patience and strength to bear them.

Let us then be of good Courage in the approaches of Death, since we see Land, and the Storm which we are in will quickly be over ; and then it will be as if it had never been, or rather the remembrance of it will be a great pleasure to us.

*Suave mari magno, turbantibus æquora ventis,  
E terrâ alterius magnum spectare periculum.  
Non quia vexari quenquam est jucunda voluptas ;  
Sed quibus ipse malis careas quia cernere suave est.*

“ It is a pleasant thing to stand upon the shore, when we see others in a great storm at Sea. Not that it is delightful to see others in danger ; but when others are in great difficulties and dangers, it is a pleasure to find our selves safe and out of danger.

And if it should please God to exercise us with great pains or tedious sickness, we should make use of all the Considerations which Reason and Religion do furnish us withal,

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withal, to help to mitigate and deceive our troubles, and to make that short way a little more smooth and easie. For the best of us have no Privilege and Exemption from the common accidents of humanity, no Piety can certainly secure to any of us an easie and comfortable death; and therefore it is a groundless Confidence for any Man to reckon upon it; we must in this, as in all other things, resign up our selves to God's good Pleasure, and submit to him the time and manner, and all other Circumstances of our departure out of this World; whether our Sun shall set in a Cloud, or shine brightest and look biggest when it is going down. But however it sets, it is the Sun still, and the Fountain of Light, and will rise gloriously. There are always the Seeds of Joy and Comfort in the Conscience of a good Man; and tho they be hid and buried for a while, they will spring forth one time or other. *Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart, as David assures us, Psal. 97. 11. I will conclude all with the words of the Author of this Psalm, Deut. 32. 29. O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their late end!*

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